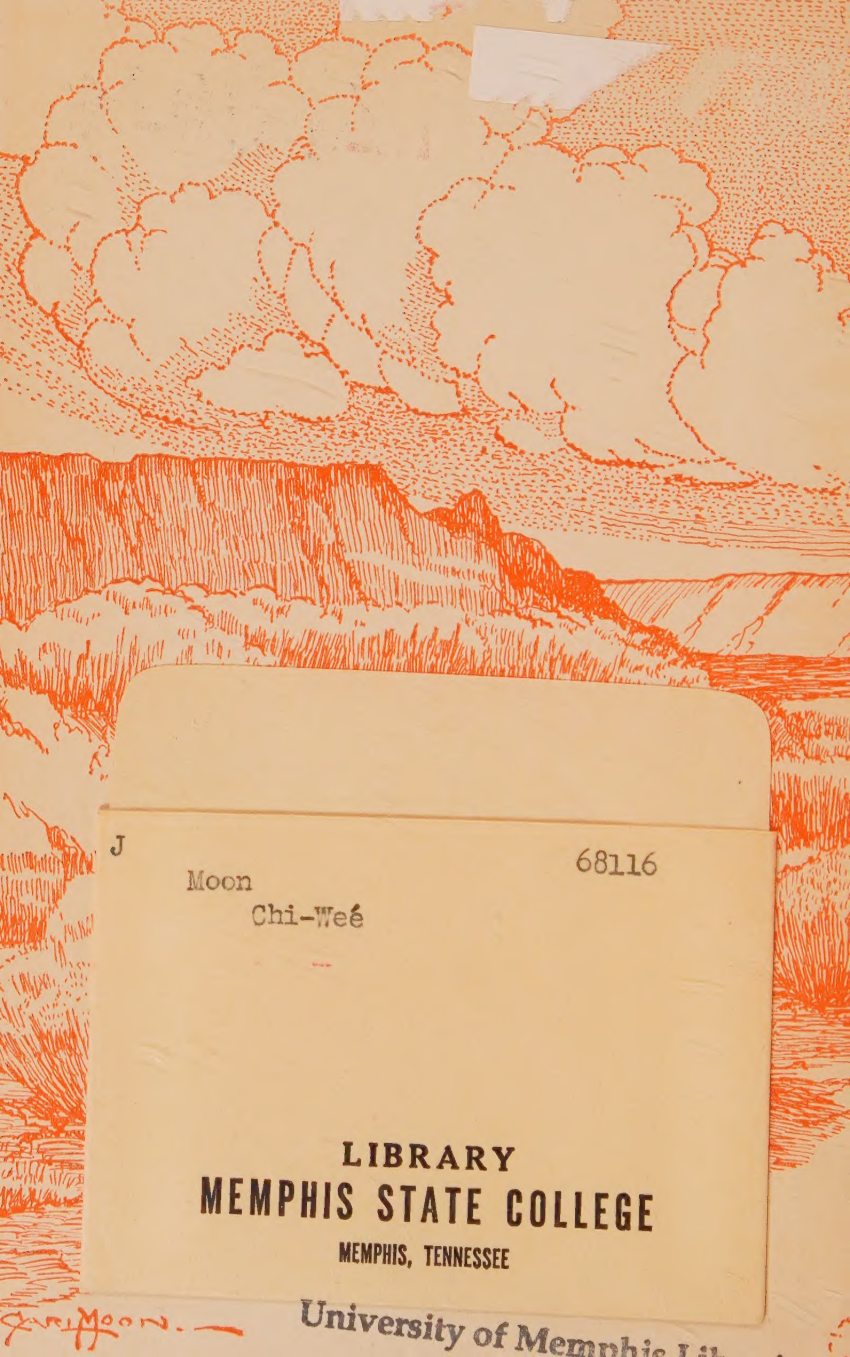
CHI-WEÉ

GRACE MOON



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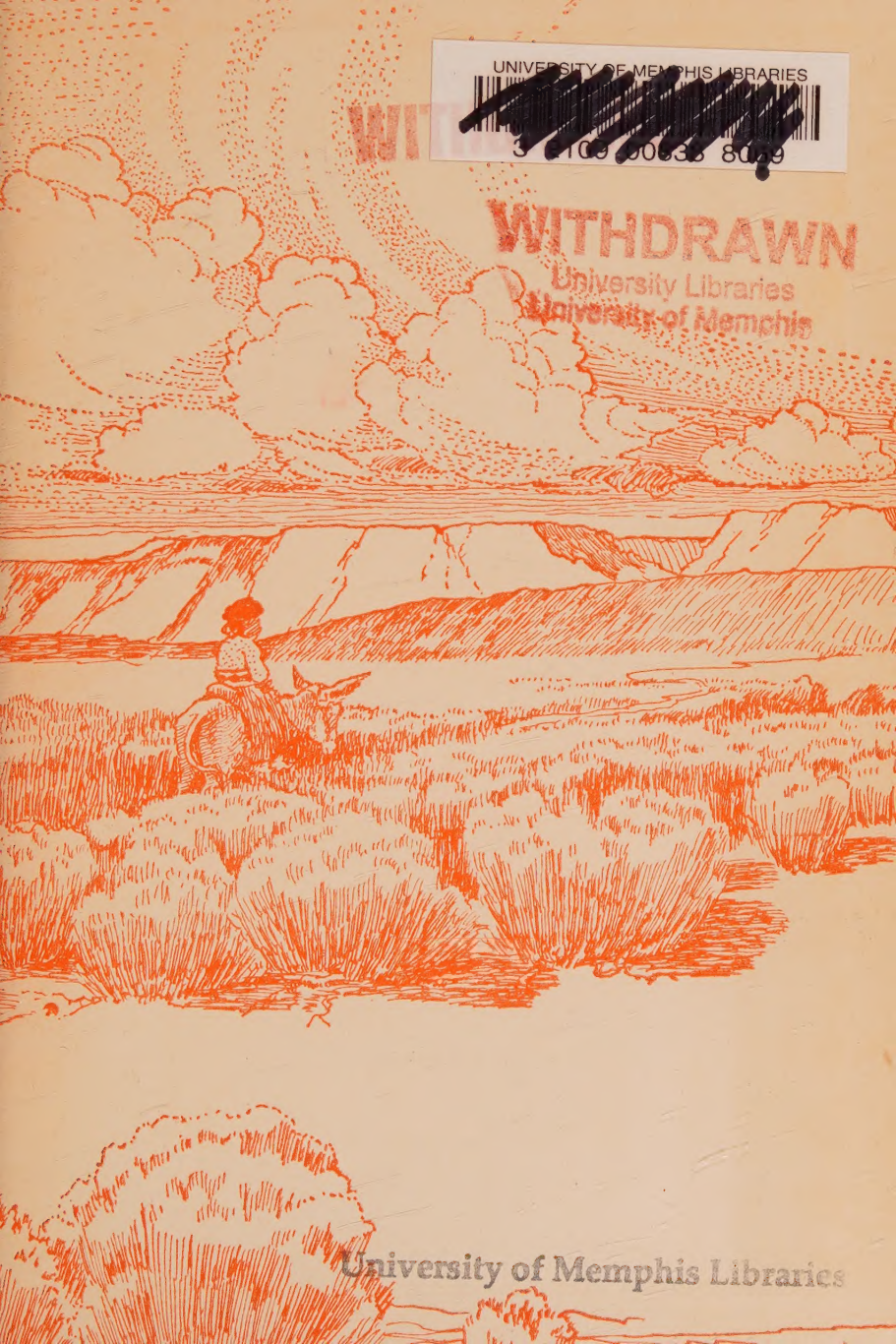

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CHI-WEE

The Adventures of a Little Indian Girl

Books by Grace and Carl Moon

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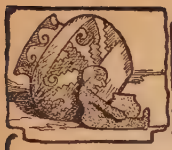
LOST INDIAN MAGIC

INDIAN LEGENDS IN RHYME

CARL MOON



CHI-WEÉ

THE ADVENTURES OF A LITTLE INDIAN GIRL

By GRACE MOON

ILLUSTRATED
BY
CARL MOON

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1951

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TO WEE

LESLIE ILLINGWORTH HOOD, JR.

THE SWEETEST BABY I KNOW, THIS
BOOK IS LOVINGLY DEDICATED BY

THE AUTHOR

A baby to-day—nodding sweetly to me,
To-morrow—who knows—a critic may be!
To-day a bright picture of angelic looks,
To-morrow a reader of books and more books!

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AN INTRODUCTION

'Way up on a mesa high,
Near the sunny desert sky,
Lies a little Indian town,
Built of houses, gray and brown.

FOR many hundreds of years this little town (called a *pueblo* in the Southwest) has lain drowsing in the sunlight up on the mesa top, and the Indians who live there now live very much as did their great-great-grandfathers and grandmothers ages ago!

Chi-weé is a very real and very much alive little Indian girl who lives up in this old, old town, and I want you to know her—the real heart of her, that is like a sweet wild bird of the desert—and I want you to know how she lives and plays, and works, too, in this very different land that is part of your own country; and, as it would be a very long way for you to go to see her in her own home, I have brought her to *you*, in these pages, hoping that she will grow to be *your* friend, as she is mine!

GRACE MOON.

CHI-WEE

The Adventures of a Little Indian Girl

CHI-WEÉ

CHAPTER I

CHI-WEÉ AND THE RABBIT

Ho! For the trail to Indianland,
To mesa top and purple hill!
It leads through sage and desert sand—
And you may follow if you will!

CHI-WEÉ was not her real name. She had a long Indian one, very hard to pronounce, but she was so little and so fat that a long, thin name didn't suit her at all. So, once, when she was a wee roly-poly baby, she had tried to imitate a little bird who sang for her and the sound she made was so like "Chee-wee" that she had been called by that name ever since!

The pueblo itself in which she lived was such a queer-looking place—up high, on top of a mesa (which is really a hill with the top flattened off),

with no walls or fences around the edges and the only way to get down, or up, a steep, narrow trail that went zigzagging down into the desert. The houses were square, with sometimes no windows and often no doors in the lower story, and the second story was smaller than the first—like building blocks fitted one above the other—so that the roof of the first was used as a dooryard for the second, and ladders were almost the only stairways.

A little spring bubbled up out of the ground at the foot of the mesa and all the water for the town had to be brought in jars up the steep trail. Food, too, was brought up this way, in great baskets; grain from the fields and peaches and apricots and melons from the orchards and the great ears of purple and red and yellow corn and the haunches of mutton and strips of goat meat for drying in the sun, and coffee and sugar from the traders, and red chili peppers that made great splashes of color on the houses when they were hung in strings by the doorways.

Chi-weé lived alone with her mother in one room of a stone house in the pueblo, and they were very poor. Her mother made pottery jars to sell to their neighbors and to the white people who came often to the mesa. The jars were very strong and beauti-

fully shaped—no one in all the Indian pueblos could make prettier jars, or finer designs on them—but they were all dull brown and black in color and it seemed that everyone wanted red jars. The Indian trader at the Canyon store had told her:

"If you will bring me red jars as well made as these brown ones, I will take all you can bring and pay you well."

So Chi-weé had heard her mother often say:

"If only we could find the red clay—surely others have found it or there would be no red jars—but nowhere in all our land have I seen the red clay."

And so they remained poor, and Chi-weé would go to the Trader's store and look longingly at the jars of red-and-white striped candy that he had so temptingly displayed on his shelves, and at the great rolls of wonderful cloth that would make such beautiful dresses for a little girl—but for some little girl whose mother had money with which to buy—and a big, hard lump would come in her throat at the thought. Once her mother had told her, they had had all these things as other people had, but that was long before she could remember, when she had been a baby, and she had a father who worked in the fields with the other men and brought home rabbits

and other game from the hunt. But he had gone away a long, long time ago, down the silent trail to the Lost Others, her mother said, and had never come back.

But to-day was a happy day in the pueblo, and for Chi-weé, sad thoughts were never long in her mind and to-day they had no place at all, for it was a feast day and there was to be a great dance in the afternoon. Chi-weé was not to take part in the dance, but it was such fun to watch the queer clowns and all the wonderful costumes of the dancers. There were the men who were painted white with streaks of black, and long fox tails dragging on the ground, and rattles of sheep's hoofs about their ankles, and those who wore tall wooden painted headdresses that looked like butterflies and birds, and the women with garlands of flowers and bunches of evergreens in their hands. And then, there were the good things to eat: little seed cakes and candies made with pinyon nuts for the children. And many white people came to the pueblo for the day—men, women, and even little children—and all of the Indians were in their best and brightest clothes.

Chi-weé, too, was dressed in her very best—a pink calico waist with a brown skirt, and around her waist

a woven belt of red and green, with tassels hanging at the side. Her black hair hung loose about her shoulders and she wore a little black shawl—but best of all were her white boots that came clear up to her knees! Of those boots she was more proud than of anything else, and she and her mother had worked hard that morning with white pipeclay to make them spotless and gleaming. No little girl in the pueblo had whiter boots than Chi-weé, and she was very sure that even the white visitors admired them, though, of course, white people knew very little about such things!

All the work of the little home had been done very early that morning: the floor was brushed clean and every basket and little jar and piece of clothing was in its place, and Chi-weé felt proud and happy that she could help her mother keep it so fresh and clean. Now she could enjoy the whole day with no thoughts of work undone to bother her.

Some time before the dance was to begin, when old Ton-té had just brought his big drum into the square before the Kiva, Chi-weé's mother called to her, and giving her a small water jar, told the little girl to go down the trail to the spring and bring back the jar full of water.

Usually the mother went herself, but to-day she did not feel strong. Chi-weé was frightened when she saw how pale her mother looked.

"It is nothing, little daughter," the mother said, when she saw the look in the little girl's eyes. "I should be strong if we had meat to eat. Ah, if we could only find the red clay—then we could have meat and many good things"; and she sighed. "But go, Chi-weé, or you will be late for the dance."

So Chi-weé started down the trail with her water jar. She could not feel unhappy for long on such a wonderful day with the sun shining and all the world dressed up for a dance.

"Surely," she thought, "surely, the Good Spirit, who takes care of all the world, will take care of my mother too." And she forgot all about everything but just being happy.

The trail was pretty steep and she almost ran all the way down, so it did not take her long to reach the spring, but she was warm and out of breath when she reached it and sat down on a big rock to rest and cool off.

How big the desert looked from here and how quiet after all the excitement of the mesa top. She could see far, far away to the sharp blue hills, and

the queer-shaped rocks that looked like ships and great animals and high buildings against the horizon. And nearer at hand were mesquite trees and tall cactuses, like fingers pointing upward, and balls of rolling tumbleweed. But Chi-weé did not rest long; she filled her jar at the spring and, balancing it on her head, was just about to start up the trail again, when, suddenly, a little brown rabbit popped up from a big bunch of sagebrush just a few feet away, and Chi-weé was instantly all excitement. She felt that she could easily catch him by throwing her shawl over him and oh, how strong and fine her mother would feel if she could have a rabbit stew for supper!

She carefully lowered the jar from her head, not taking her eye from the rabbit; but her small shaking hands set it too suddenly on the rocks—BANG!—went the little pottery jar, smashed to bits! But she hardly looked at it, her eyes were still on the rabbit. Her mother would forgive her for the broken jar if only she could bring home the rabbit. It had bounded away at the sound of the breaking jar but had stopped just a short distance farther on, to look back and see what had happened.

Chi-weé took her shawl in her hand and crept as

carefully as she could toward the little animal. It saw her coming and went jumping away through the sage, the wee bit of tail looking very comical as it went up and down, up and down, with every jump. But this was a very curious little rabbit and instead of "hippity-hopping" clear out of sight, as most rabbits do, he would go just a short way and stop at a bush and look back at Chi-weé to see if she were still following. He seemed very friendly and almost, at times, Chi-weé wished he did not have to be made into a stew; but then she would think of her mother and run all the faster for the thought. Each time the rabbit stopped Chi-weé thought *surely* she would catch him and got her shawl all ready to throw over him, when—WHISK!—there he was off again to the next big bush!

The dance was altogether forgotten, and her mother, and her best clean clothes, and Chi-weé thought of nothing at all but that little brown rabbit and how she would *surely* catch him the next time he stopped.

On they went—and on—and on—over great patches of dry grass and sand, and places where rocks rolled under her feet and she slipped and slid and almost fell; places where the dry pinyon cones

crackled under her feet and cactus thorns scratched her and tore her dress. Chi-weé grew hot and breathless, and the minutes slipped gradually into hours, but each time, now, it seemed as if the rabbit stopped for a longer while and she thought he *must* be getting tired, as she was.

They came to a little wash now, a place that had been a stream just a short while ago, in the rainy season. The little rabbit went down one bank of this and up the other side. Then came more sage-brush and rocks and desert—and then another wash! The rabbit ran straight up this one and Chi-weé came to places that were still wet from the rains—one place was *splashy!*—and another—another! And she stopped suddenly as she realized that her lovely white boots, her dress, and even her hands and face were streaked and splashed with mud!

Her little heart sank within her and she forgot the rabbit, whose wee bit of tail bobbed out of sight, this time without being followed or noticed at all. Oh! What would her mother say? And the dance?—why, it was getting late, the sun was low—perhaps the dance was over! Oh, *why* had she been so foolish?—and she hadn't even caught the little rabbit after all—and she had broken the water jar!

Chi-weé felt that this was the very saddest day in all her life—this day that had begun so beautifully—and her heart was almost breaking. She turned around and started slowly for home.

There was the place where she had splashed through the mud—and there was more—the sticky stuff filled the whole wash, and Chi-weé had to climb the bank to avoid going through it again. And, oh, what a sight her boots were!

She started to run now and ran as fast as she could the long, long way back to the foot of the mesa where the trail came down to the spring. The tears were pouring down her cheeks but she didn't care—it seemed as if nothing much mattered any more.

Many people were coming down the trail—the dance was over then, she thought, with a fresh wave of grief—and everybody looked at the little girl curiously as she passed. Some of the white women even stopped and seemed to want to speak to her—she saw the teacher from the Mission school who had spoken to her kindly many times—but she put her hands over her face and stumbled up the trail, she did not want to talk to any one, white people least of all.

It was almost dark when Chi-weé reached home

Chi-weé put her hands over her face and stumbled up the trail. She did not want to talk to any one.

and she felt, at first, as if she could not go in; but then she slowly pushed open the door and walked into the little room.

A delicious odor floated out of the door as she opened it, and her mother was bending over a little fire of glowing coals stirring something in an iron pot. It was from the iron pot that the delicious odor came. The mother spoke quietly, without turning her head:

"Where have you been, little daughter?"

Chi-weé did not answer, the cry lump in her throat was too big and hard and her eyes grew blind with fresh tears.

Her mother turned around then and her own eyes grew large and strange as she looked at the little girl.

"It—it—it—was a little rabbit," sobbed Chi-weé. "I wanted it for—y-o-u—my mother—oh, I wanted it so!" and the little voice went off into wails of grief.

Her mother rose slowly and came toward the little girl; then she knelt down and looked at the splashed boots. Suddenly her hands began to tremble and she scraped off a bit of the mud with her finger and examined it carefully.

"Where have you been, Chi-weé?" she asked, excitedly, then. "Tell me, where have you been?"

This was very different from what she had ex-

pected, and Chi-weé felt the sobs stop in her throat. Her hands came down from her eyes and she looked at her mother wonderingly. There were bright-red spots in the cheeks that had been so pale, and she almost shook the little girl in her excitement.

"Over there," pointed Chi-weé, "'way over there. The mud was in a wash——"

"Is there more of this same mud?" questioned her mother. "Very much more of this same mud?"

"Oh, yes," said Chi-weé, "and it is very sticky—there is enough to make a whole town."

"Oh, my daughter," said the mother then, kneeling down by the little girl and putting her arms about her, "do not cry, this is a very happy day for us."

Chi-weé opened her eyes wider yet. What strange things were happening! She had thought it was a very sad day—just a moment before she had thought that. What *could* her mother mean?

"See," said the mother again, "it is the red clay you have found—the red clay for which we have looked so long. And now I will make many jars that the Trader will buy and, oh, little one, we shall have *many* things. And the dance will not be until to-morrow, for Che-day, who leads the dance, could

not come to-day. And see, what the teacher lady brought—for me, a rabbit—I have made it into a beautiful stew for our supper; and for you—look yonder on the little stone in the corner."

And following the pointing finger, Chi-weé saw, on the little stone that was her own, a jar—a wonderful jar, of the kind the Trader kept on his shelves—a jar filled with the red-and-white striped candy of her dreams!

CHAPTER II

THE ADVENTURE OF THE GOAT

What fun to have a little goat, and wander where you will,
Through desert trails and sandy wash and o'er the rocky hill.
What fun to watch the dust clouds dance, and hear the wil
hawk's cry,
When all the world is dressed for spring, and clouds go sailing by

THE dance had been a very wonderful affair an Chi-weé had been so happy and had eaten s many good things that she felt, afterward, it wa rather lucky such a dance came only once or twice year—there are limits to what a little girl can take i —even a very plump little girl!

But much better than the dance had been th happy fact that from that very day the day of th finding of the red clay, her mother had grown steadil better and stronger and little rosy spots of colo crept into her cheeks and stayed there, for her illnes had been just "sorry sickness," a very common kin She was sorry that they were so poor and that sh could not buy things for Chi-weé that other littl girls had, and though they did not have much mo

money yet (for one cannot get rich in a day from selling pottery jars), she could buy little things that they could not afford before: a warm new blanket for their bed, and a shiny iron pot for the dinner (how good it did smell when Chi-weé came in tired, that dinner in the iron pot!), and a painted gourd for the water jar that Chi-weé thought *especially* beautiful. But, best of all, when they had saved for what seemed a long, long time—they bought a little goat!

It seemed to Chi-weé that she had always wanted a goat! It was not so much that the milk was delicious and fresh and sweet, nor that she delighted in brushing the long white hair and in watching the funny wiggling of the goat's mouth as it ate the handfuls of juicy grass she fed it—it was more that she had gained a new companion—a live playmate, for there were very few children of her own age in the pueblo.

The goat would listen to everything that she told it and answer in such a satisfactory way, with a roll of its serious eyes and sometimes a nod of the head, and always the answer was just as Chi-weé hoped it would be, agreeing with her every word and mood; she felt that it understood exactly what she meant, which was more than people often did.

They quickly grew to be the very best of friends, and Chi-weé's nicest days were the ones she spent with the little goat, wandering out into the desert searching for green spots where the freshest grass and choicest herbs grew, and here she would often find wild berries for herself, too, and queer new flowers that she would gather to put in her small brown bowl at home.

It was on one of these little journeys into the desert that they had the adventure—she and the goat!

It did not begin like an adventure—they had started off as they had done many a time before—down the trail that led down the mesa side past the spring; through the orchards and fields that crept as close as they could to the great rock, and over the sandy wash where they always had such fun scrambling down one side and up the other, slipping and sliding with the sand and pebbles, and this time Chi-weé laughed so hard at the funny scrambles of the goat that her legs grew weak and she had to sit down on a rock in the wash and wait quite a while before she felt strong enough to climb out the other side.

As soon as they were out of the wash they saw the two boys coming across the desert—but even then Chi-weé did not think of adventure. She had often

seen the two boys and did not much like them. They were Navajos, not much older than herself, and they went into the desert to trap small animals for food and for the skins. They called to her sometimes teasingly but did not come near, and this day, when she saw them, she thought they would pass her as they had always done before; but this time, while they were still quite far away, they stopped and talked with their heads close together, and if Chi-weé had had ears that could hear so far away this is what she would have heard them say:

"Listen, Tōt-say, I have a plan—it is a wonderful plan—to make money. You know we need many dollars to buy that pony we will both ride to the chicken-pull at Ganado before long."

"Yes," said Tōt-say, "I know. What is the plan?"

"It is this—oh, it is quite a wonderful plan! You know they said at the Mission school how men had stolen a little child somewhere and would not return it until much money was paid them?"

"I remember," said Tōt-say.

"Well, do you not see this child that comes? We will take *her*, and when they hunt all over the desert we will tell them that if they will pay us much money we will find her."

"Ou-ow," said Tōt-say, "that is not a wonderful plan. What would we do with her? My mother has taught me never to hurt those who are small or old."

"We would not hurt her," answered the other, quickly. "Never would I hurt a little one—but listen—you remember the old hogan in the cotton-woods where no one goes?—They say a witch is there, but I am not afraid of witches, and besides, there is nothing there, for I have been myself to see. We would put her there and no one would think to hunt in such a place."

"How much money would they give?" asked Tōt-say.

"Oh, a great deal," answered Yaṅ-ti, throwing wide his arms. "Enough and more to buy that pony. Do you not think the plan is good?"

"What do they do to people who steal children?" asked Tōt-say, suddenly.

"Oh, that does not matter," said Yaṅ-ti, "and besides, I do not know. But they will never know that *we* took her—we will say only that we, too, will look for her, and when we find her they will give us the money and think we are very wise.—Come, she is near——"

And that was the way the adventure began! But

Chi-weé did not know even yet that to-day was to be any different from any other day and she came on, nearer and nearer, with the little goat, and they were very happy stopping at every bright-colored bush and carefully examining every big rock for horned toads and lizards and other curious live things. They had forgotten the boys altogether and it was a great surprise to come out beyond a clump of sage-brush and find the two of them waiting there with a very strange look in their eyes. Chi-weé did not understand why they should wait there, and gave the goat a little push and would have walked on faster, when one of the boys spoke to her.

"We have a very curious thing to show you," he said, in a hesitating voice. "It is a thing you will like to see."

Chi-weé did not answer and she did not stop and her heart began to beat very fast.

The boy spoke again and began to walk as fast as she, by her side.

"You will like very much to see this thing," he said. "Come, we will show you." And he took hold of her arm. The other boy came to the other side and he, too, took hold of an arm.

"Let me go!" cried Chi-weé, in a high voice of

alarm, "let me go. I do not wish to see the thing. I do not wish to see *anything!*"

"But you must come," said the boy, now in a very different voice. "You *must* come with us. There is nothing to fear, but if you make much noise we will bind a thong about your mouth."

Chi-weé looked desperately back at the mesa, which seemed very far away, and she could see no one anywhere who could come and help her. She tore her hands away from both boys and kicked their shins and scratched and fought like a little wildcat, but it did her no good. One boy she could have fought and might have beaten, for she was very strong for her size, but two were too much for her, and they finally caught both her hands again and bound them with a thong.

"My mother will beat you for this!" cried Chi-weé, breathlessly. "With a stick she will beat you—you are bad boys—you will be locked up in a stone place with iron bars."

"Hey, Yaḥ-ti!" cried Tōt-say, suddenly, at this, "you said no one would know it was we who took her—*she* knows! Now, the plan does not seem good to me."

"Yah! yah! Weak one!" jeered Yaḥ-ti. "Would

you draw back now? The plan is good, I tell you. Listen," he said to Chi-weé, "if ever you tell that we took you—the witch will get you!"

"I am not afraid," answered Chi-weé, bravely, and she did not look afraid. "I do not fear you or your witch. Witches are not true—it is the Good Spirit who helps me *always*—you shall see. But if you do not let me go, *now*—it is *you* who will need to be afraid!"

Tōt-say plainly *was* afraid.

"It is a bad plan," he said, "I do not want to be locked up in a stone place."

Yah-ti looked at him uncertainly for a moment and then spoke in a voice that he made extra strong to hide the half-fear that was there.

"The plan is good," he said, "and half done—we will have that pony and much money beside—come, Tōt-say, let us be quick!"

Chi-weé pulled back with all her might and dug her little feet in the sand and roots of sage—but she felt herself sliding and slipping in the direction the boys were pulling her—then——

"*BA-BA!*" she cried (that was the name she had given her little goat). "Do not let them take me—Ba-ba, *help* me!"

And then a most surprising thing happened—the goat lifted up its head at her first call and stopped still as if listening, and then——! It was hardly a thing to be believed, but just this way it happened: Like an arrow from the bow the little goat with lowered head shot forward, and—*BANG!*—down went Yaĥ-ti in a heap of dust on the ground, and again a white thing shot through the air, and—*BANG!*—went Tōt-say in another little heap of dust!

But quicker than they went down and quicker than the goat, the two boys, covered with dust, jumped from the ground and made for a juniper tree that was not far away and scrambled up into its branches before Chi-weé knew what had happened. She was left standing by herself, every bit as surprised and astonished as the two boys. But Ba-ba was not yet through, she ran straight to the juniper tree, and, with strange snorting noises through her nose and pawing the dust until it rose high in the air, she stationed herself just beneath the boys in a way that showed she intended to stay.

"Aouow!" cried Tōt-say. "Call him away!—Call this animal away!"

"He will kill us if we get down!" cried Yaĥ-ti. "Get a stick and beat him."

But Chi-weé was still too surprised to move—it had happened so suddenly, she did not realize how completely the tables had been turned. It did not take her long to free her hands from the thong, which had not been very tightly tied. Then she patted the goat on the head.

"Good Ba-ba—good Ba-ba," she said, and now she began to get her breath and look about her. The boys looked very funny hanging to the branches of the tree, like big black bugs. Ba-ba was still snorting and pawing the dust and now Chi-weé saw what she had not noticed before—a big red smear on the face of one of the boys. This frightened her just a little—perhaps they had been punished enough —but she spoke very gravely:

"I think I will go now," she said. "My goat will watch you until I tell them in the pueblo what you have done."

"Oh, NO!" yelled the boys at once. "We do not want to be locked in that stone place. Do not tell them in the pueblo—and we will be good—*always!*"

"Look!" cried Yaḥ-ti, "I will bring you a great bag of pinyon nuts if you will not tell!" and in his excitement he almost fell out of the tree. "See, I have had bad things enough happen—I am broken in two

pieces—and there is blood—look, there is blood!" It was only his nose that bled, but Chi-weé did not know that, and began to be a little more frightened—she did not want Ba-ba to kill any one even if they had been very bad—so she said:

"If I will make my goat let you go, will you be good always—always?"

"*Always!*" they cried, as if with one voice, and if Chi-weé had not been such a little girl she would have smiled, but this was a very serious time for her and she did not think of smiling.

"Come, Ba-ba," she cried. "Come—it is enough!" But Ba-ba would not come, she lowered her head and snorted more than ever.

Then Chi-weé found a little stick and struck her lightly on the back—the first time she ever had struck Ba-ba. The little goat jumped but did not raise her head and Chi-weé struck a little harder; then Ba-ba, for the second time that day, did a very surprising thing—she turned straight around and lowered her head at Chi-weé! There was time only for one thing, and Chi-weé did it—she brought down the little stick again with all her might and then jumped as hard as she could out of the way of the goat.

Like the wind Ba-ba shot past her and away and

away into the desert leaving a little cloud of dust behind her.

The boys gave a great sigh of relief but they did not come down from the tree—who could tell when that goat would come back again?

Chi-weé stood like a little stone image looking into the desert after the goat. Yaḥ-ti, who saw the expression on her face, spoke to her.

"That goat will come back," he said. "That goat knows well how to take care of itself—I would not have worry thoughts for that goat." But Chi-weé did not listen.

"My goat has gone," she wailed. "My little Ba-ba has gone into the desert," and then, as there was nothing else to do, she followed after it through the sage. She could not see where Ba-ba had gone, there were many bushes and trees right here, and very soon the dust trail settled to the earth.

"I must find her," she panted, as she ran. "She will never, never know how to find the trail back to home." And she ran to every little high place of ground, looking far and near with her hand shading her eyes, and she called until she was hoarse, but she saw no sign of the little goat.

After a long, long while another dust cloud came

from far in front of her and after a time she saw it was a man riding on a burro. He came nearer and nearer and then she could see that it was old Mah-peé-ti, the sheep-herder.

When he came very close Chi-weé called to him.

"Have you seen a little goat, Mah-peé-ti?" she cried. "A little goat with long white hair?"

He stopped his burro and looked at her thoughtfully, a twinkle was in his eye. He was a very old friend of Chi-weé.

"Let me think," he said, slowly. "A little goat"—and he began to count on his fingers—"twenty—thirty—fifty—maybe a hundred goats I have seen this morning—all with white hair!"

"Oh!" wailed Chi-weé, "but this is a very different little goat—it is my Ba-ba."

Mah-peé-ti reached into a sack that was hung across the burro's back and brought out two shiny red apples.

"We can think much better when we have eaten these," he said, gravely, and gave one to Chi-weé and took one himself. Chi-weé did not know how hungry she was until she saw those apples and then the surprising thing was that though they looked very, very good they tasted even better! But Chi-weé

could not forget Ba-ba wandering off there somewhere in the desert and with each bite of her apple her heart grew heavier, but she was very polite and would not go until she had finished it, then:

"I must go now," she said, "and look for that little goat."

The twinkle in Mah-peé-ti's eyes was plainer now.

"You have not asked Chatto," he said, and he meant his burro, for that was his name. "See how wise he looks."

Chi-weé looked from Mah-peé-ti to the little burro, and this time she saw the twinkle in the old man's eyes.

"Have *you* seen my little goat, Chatto?" she cried. "Do you know where she is?"

"Look!" cried Mah-peé-ti. "See how he waggles his ears—does not one point to that clump of sage yonder? There is green grass on the other side of that sage and it *may* be that Chatto saw a little goat eating there as we passed—a little goat with a red thong about its neck."

"Oh, *that* is Ba-ba!" laughed Chi-weé. "I will get her this very moment. And I give you my thanks, Mah-peé-ti—oh, no—to *Chatto*, I will give thanks," and she ran, laughing, to the clump of sage

where, sure enough, she found the little goat eating grass as if nothing had happened and she hugged her and patted her until Ba-ba looked up with surprised eyes as if to say, "What other thing did you expect?"

And now a new thought came to Chi-weé and, after a little while of rest, she ran back to the tree where the boys had been, but they were nowhere to be seen in all the desert. A little smile came to the lips of Chi-weé.

"I think they will be good now," she said to herself. "For a while they will be good—and to *me* always, for maybe I would tell if they were not. But come, my Ba-ba," she said to the little goat. "We must hurry back to the home place. Have you forgotten what is to happen to-morrow?"

CHAPTER III

CHI-WEÉ AND THE BLUE STONE

Out in the Desert the sand whirls free,
And the breezes blow with a deep, glad sound,
And the view is open for all to see—
With a border of misty hills around!

Out in the Desert the air is sweet
With the tang of camp fires burning low,
And countless trails of many feet
Through sage and sand and mesquite go!

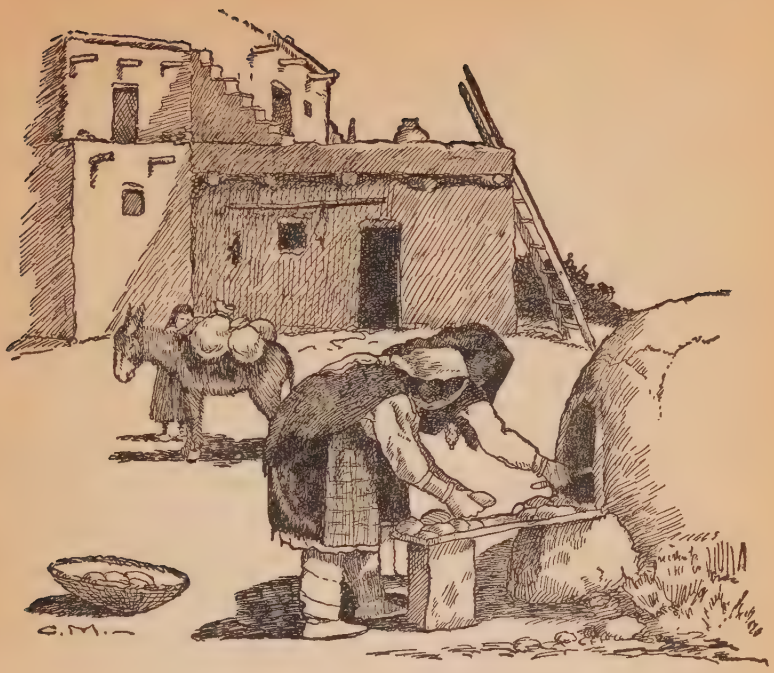
WHEN the first ray of sunshine peeked in through a broken place in her door the next morning, Chi-weé sat up on her bed of sheepskins and blinked her eyes. What was it that made her feel so happy this day—? As if something very, very good were about to happen—— And then, she remembered! This was the day of peaches! The day when everyone would go down the trail from the mesa top to the peach orchards and pick peaches and eat good things that had been preparing for days. All the women of the pueblo had been baking, and grinding, and mixing until it seemed

there would be enough good things to feed all the world; and the children would play games, and run races and chase rabbits, and, oh, what a wonderful place the world was, and how thankful she was to be a little Pueblo Indian girl living on the top of a mesa, with a great wide, beautiful desert spread out on every side to keep the rest of the world away!

Her mother was already up. Chi-weé could see her across the small room bending over her metate stone, grinding corn. Always, it seemed to the little girl, when she was not making pottery, she was grinding corn. What a lot of piki bread they must eat to need so much corn! But then, they did not eat very much besides piki bread, as they were still quite poor, and that was another reason why this was to be such a wonderful day; for there would be peaches and seed cakes, and melons to eat down in the peach orchards, and *possibly* a nice rabbit stew—last year there had been one—and Chi-weé smacked her lips at the thought.

"And my new belt—may I wear that, Mother?" she asked, eagerly. "The one you have just finished?"

"Yes, Chi-weé, little one," smiled her mother. "And now, come, here is a jar of fresh goat's milk,



All the women of the pueblo had been baking, and grinding, and mixing until it seemed there would be enough good things to feed all the world.

from Ba-ba, for your breakfast, and dried apricots and piki bread—and here is corn to shell before we go, and I must finish a jar for to-morrow's baking."

Chi-weé felt too happy to eat but she finished her breakfast and was shelling the corn when someone pushed open the door and walked into the small room.

It was someone Chi-weé did not like—a woman who made much trouble for many people and who had a very sharp tongue. She came into the room and sat down on the floor near Chi-weé's mother. They knew that she had come to say something, but they asked no questions, as is the way of Indians. In a little while she nodded her head and smiled. It wasn't a very nice smile.

"You make very fine jars," she said to Chi-weé's mother, and her voice was as unpleasant as her smile had been, "but are they fine enough to bring a price like *this?*" and she drew something from a little bag at her belt and held it for them to see. It was a very beautiful and very perfect turquoise, the largest Chi-weé had ever seen, and it was the color of the sky on a very warm day, right up overhead in the very deepest and bluest part.

"*O-o-h!*" said Chi-weé and drew out the sound

with a long breath, and the woman smiled with a great satisfaction.

"This is the pay I receive for *my* jars," she said. "And on the day of peaches I *bring* things to the feast and do not only take them all away in my stomach."

That was a very ugly thing to say and Chi-weé felt a hurt within her, especially as her mother looked down and began to grind the corn more slowly. To be poor was not a thing one could help, and not a thing to be ashamed of.

The woman rose from the floor, shook out her cotton skirt, and walked out of the room without another word, and Chi-weé was glad when she was gone.

Now the wonderful day was to begin! Chi-weé pushed the basket of corn she had been shelling against the wall and carefully lifted the new red belt from its peg in the wall. Her mother rose from the grinding and shook the dust of the cornmeal from her hands—then a shadow darkened the doorway and the unpleasant woman again walked into the room.

"Where is my blue stone?" she said, without pausing for breath, and her sharp eyes searched every

corner of the little room. Then she looked at Chi-weé's mother and there was a strange, suspicious look in her eyes. "Where is my blue stone?" she asked again. "No one has seen it but you, and it is gone."

Chi-weé's mother stood up very straight and still and looked the woman in the eyes.

"We know nothing of your blue stone," she said. "Look, if you think it is here." And the woman looked; on the floor and in jars, and in the little fireplace, but the stone was not in any of the places.

"No one else has seen it," repeated the woman. "It has been nowhere else. I shall tell in the peach orchards that someone steals in our pueblo, and I will know how to get my stone again." And with another ugly, dark look at Chi-weé's mother, she went, muttering, out of the door.

It seemed to Chi-weé as if a great, black cloud had suddenly covered the sky, and the happiness had gone from her heart. What did it mean? Did the woman really think that she or her mother was a *thief?* And was her blue stone really gone? The woman was not pretending, Chi-weé felt sure of that—she must have lost the stone—but where?

Chi-weé's mother was still standing as she had been

when the woman left, with her face toward the door.

"A thief!" she said, in a low voice. "They will think I am a thief," and she turned to Chi-weé. "We will not go down to the peach orchards, little daughter, until this blue stone has been found."

Chi-weé's heart sank very low then. Somehow she had known that something evil was about to happen when the woman came into the room. And now—all the others were passing their door on their way to the trail down from the mesa top. Little children laughed and shouted in the street and women smiled as they shifted the large baskets they carried to more comfortable positions, and many called to Chi-weé and her mother as they passed. She was almost surprised to see that the sun was still shining outside, she had felt that it was gone. She hung the little red belt again on its peg and began, with her mother, to search everywhere in the room where a blue stone could be, but it was not to be found. They searched in the street outside and in the folds of their dresses and belts, but it was not there.

At last Chi-weé's mother said:

"It is of no use, little daughter, the stone is not here. But until it is found we shall not be happy again." And she sat down on the floor with her

hands in her lap, and it was the first time for many days that Chi-weé had seen those hands idle.

"Little Mother," said Chi-weé, and slipped down to the floor and took one of those idle hands in hers, "do not feel sorry. It hurts inside of me to see you sorry. The Good Spirit, who always takes care of us, will take care of us now. You'll see—and I shall find that stone!" And she ran out of the house to hide what she felt was in her eyes and to get rid of the lump that was in her throat. She walked to the edge of the mesa and looked toward the peach orchards far below, and it seemed to her that she could hear the shouts of the children at their games. Soon it would be time for the seed cakes and peaches and rabbit stew—she was hungry—the thought made her suddenly *very* hungry—and she walked slowly back to her home, looking carefully in the dust as she passed for any sign of the blue stone.

Her mother was sitting just outside the doorway finishing a clay jar and she did not speak as Chi-weé entered.

There was no piki bread in the basket where their store was kept and Chi-weé realized that she would have to make some. She had often done this before and so she set to work without loss of time.

First she made a fire under the smooth bake-stone and put some hot coals on top of it until it was so hot she could not touch it with her fingertip. Then she raked the coals off the top and cleaned it until it shone. Next she poured water on some of the fine ground corn that was ready in a shallow dish and stirred it carefully with a wooden paddle. There was one large lump that would not smooth out and Chi-weé stirred and stirred at it until finally she lifted it out and laid it on the floor. IT SHONE *BLUE* LIKE THE SKY!—through the cornmeal! And Chi-weé felt her heart give a great jump and then begin to beat so hard she could hardly breathe! THE BLUE STONE! THE TURQUOISE OF THE UNPLEASANT WOMAN!

She jumped to her feet and, wiping the batter from the stone, ran with it to her mother. They both became so happy and excited they forgot all about the piki bread—yes, there could be no doubt about it—the blue stone was found—the same the woman had shown them! But how had it come to be in the dish of meal? Probably when the woman had shaken her skirt it had popped over before any one could see—anyway, here it was! And Chi-weé reached excitedly for her red belt again and they both prepared

to go down to the peach orchards, the mother almost as happy and eager as the child.

They almost ran down the trail and reached the orchards just as the others were calling the children

in from their games to eat the feast so temptingly spread out on blankets in a great shady place.

The unpleasant woman was there and when Chi-weé's mother explained to her breathlessly where the

blue stone had been found and placed it in her hand, even then she did not look pleased, but put it quickly in the little bag at her belt with a swift look around to see if others watched, and she gave no word of thanks to Chi-weé or her mother.

But Chi-weé did not care, or see—her eyes were on the great golden peaches and melons and cakes, and yes—there *was* a rabbit stew!—in a great olla, sending forth odors that made a hungry little girl fairly squirm inside. And then they all sat down to the feast and the good things tasted even better than they looked, and Chi-weé felt she had *never* been so happy in her life.

Just as the feast was ending, and only crumbs and melon rinds could be seen where so many good things had been, a man—a white man—rode up on a horse.

He was the Trader from the store in the canyon and Chi-weé always thought him good and pleasant, but to-day he wore a frown on his face. He pulled up his horse as he came to where the Indians were sitting and looked around at them all, then he spoke:

"You men of the mesa are honest men," he said. "But there is among you a thief!"

Chi-weé saw the unpleasant woman bend down

to try to hide herself behind the woman who sat next her, but she was too large and could not hide.

"I, myself, saw this thief steal," continued the man, "but, to make an example of her before all her people I let her take a fine turquoise from my store, and she has it now. Stand up!" he said, pointing his whip at the unpleasant woman, "and give me the stone you stole from my store!"

"I have no blue stone," said the woman, in a sullen voice, and not one of the Indians spoke, though several had seen her put the stone in the bag at her belt.

But the eyes of the white man were sharp.

"What is in the little bag at your belt?" he asked, quickly. "Hand it here!" And the woman, very slowly and with an ugly look, gave him the bag, and he turned the blue stone out on his palm for all to see.

"I should not do this," he then said. "If this woman had not been a thief before—more than once—and she tells many lies. But, more than that, the police at the railroad have told me she is wanted there, and if she will take advice, she will go to some place where she is not so well known as she is here—and she will go *this day!*"

There was fear now in the unpleasant woman's face, and she rose swiftly from the group about the blankets and wrapping her shawl about her shoulders, walked quickly away. Chi-weé never saw her again.

And to Chi-weé's mother the Trader said:

"I have need of more jars—the fine ones that you make—and will pay you well for them." And he rode away in a cloud of dust.

Chi-weé never saw the unpleasant woman again.

CHAPTER IV

THE DESIRABLE SHAWL

What matters the shade of a little maid's skin
If her heart is the kind that is right, within?
If it sings with the song of the Night Hawk's cry,
And leaps to the pink of the pale dawn sky?
There are hearts that are wild, and hearts that are tame,
But hearts that are true are ever the same!

IT WAS a beautiful shawl—Chi-weé could see that clear across the Trader's store: dark blue on one side and glowing red on the other, with a fringe of the same two colors, and it looked warm and soft and *much* to be desired!

Chi-weé saw the look in her mother's eyes as she passed her hand over its surface, and in her heart a fierce little voice said:

"My mother shall *have* that shawl—the Good Spirit made that shawl to be for *my mother!*"

It was trading day for Chi-weé and her mother. In the early morning they had come in the wagon of Mah-peé-ti, the sheep-herder, with the jars that Chi-weé's mother had made, to trade them at the store for food and clothing.

It was a long ride in the bumpety old wagon, from the high mesa town to the canyon store, a ride over the wide desert of many-changing colors and up and down sandy washes, but it was a ride that Chi-weé dearly loved and of which she never tired. There were so many living things to see on the way: prairie dogs and lizards and horned toads; sheep and, sometimes, away in the distance, an antelope or a gray coyote. And then there was always the excitement of wondering, when they bumped down into a very deep wash, whether Mah-peé-ti's old wagon would hold together until they got up the other side. But it always did and it always had, for as many years as Chi-weé could remember, for once a month they had taken this ride in the same old wagon ever since Chi-weé had been old enough to sit by herself instead of being carried in the shawl on her mother's back—and the wagon looked now as it had looked then—like the desert and the pueblo where she lived, it did not seem to change.

Chi-weé came close to the shawl and felt it with her fingers—it was soft as it looked, and very warm.

"You will buy it, my mother?" she asked, eagerly, laying her cheek on the soft wool.

Her mother shook her head a little sadly.

"No, my little one," she said. "We must trade to-day for food and not for the things we do not need."

"But you *need* a shawl—*this* shawl," said Chi-weé. "You *know*, my mother, that you need it!"

"We will not speak of it more," said her mother, turning away. "We have money for food only, my daughter." And she spoke to the Trader of the flour and sugar and grain that she needed.

Chi-weé stood looking down at the shawl and queer thoughts were in her mind, but above them all was the firm resolution—"My mother *shall have* this soft, beautiful shawl!"

She waited until her mother had carried some of the food out to the wagon and then she went to the Trader. He was a pleasant man and had always spoken kind words to Chi-weé, so she had no fear of him.

"What is the price of that shawl?" she asked him. "The soft blue one with the red underside?"

"Six dollars," answered the Trader, with a kindly smile for Chi-weé. "It is all wool and very warm."

There was a thoughtful look in Chi-weé's eyes as her little hand went to her throat and opened the collar of her cotton waist.

"Look," she said, softly, to the Trader, "this is a very beautiful necklace that I have on. See, the shells are the color of the sky when the sun comes up—pink. I—I—think it is a very beautiful necklace."

The Trader stooped and looked at it.

"Yes," he nodded, "I would give you two dollars for the necklace, if you cared to sell it."

Her face fell and her fingers touched the pink shells tenderly.

"Two dollars? I—I—thought—you see, it is the shawl I want——"

"I'm sorry," said the Trader, gently, "but the shawl is worth more, little girl. No, I could not exchange it for the necklace."

Chi-weé felt her heart grow very heavy and all the way home in the bumpety wagon she had no eyes for the lizards and little hares and prairie dogs that scuttled out of their way, nor for the wonderful colors of the tumbleweeds and cactus, or the far-away blue buttes—her mind was busy with plans to earn money for the wonderful shawl—but *how?*

There were very few ways to earn money in the high mesa town. She could weave a very little—an old man in the pueblo had taught her that—but that

took a long time and money, too, to buy the colored wools, and pottery she could not yet make well enough to sell. She could help pick peaches and apricots, but now it was not the time for them, and anyway they gave her but a few pennies for that. And she had nothing to sell—nothing but the necklace, her one treasure—and the Trader had told her that was worth only two dollars—and the shawl cost six! Oh, but it was a very difficult thing, this earning money—she could not understand how other people did it. But not for a moment did she give up the thought of getting the shawl for her mother—it was just *how* to get it that puzzled her.

When next they went to the Trader's Chi-weé looked eagerly for the shawl and she felt that her heart almost stopped beating when she did not see it where it had been before. Of course others would see how beautiful it was and buy it; others who had six dollars and even more—others who did not have to wait and plan; she felt the hot tears stinging her eyelids—*never* had her heart been so set on anything as on that beautiful blue shawl with its red underside!

"Has it been sold?" she asked the Trader, in a voice she could not quite keep from shaking—"that—that beautiful shawl—has it been sold?"

He looked at her for a moment with a little puzzled frown on his face.

"The shawl?" he asked, and then a look of remembrance came into his eyes as he laughed a little. "No, it is still here—did you want to buy it?"

A sudden resolve came into Chi-weé's heart—it almost frightened her.

"Yes," she said, quickly, and looked to see that her mother was beyond hearing, "I want to buy it—but I have not the money—not *all* now. Here!" and with trembling fingers she unclasped the little shell necklace and thrust it into his hand, "I will bring more next time. Could you, oh, could you keep it a little while for me?"

There was such eagerness in the little voice, such a look in the eyes, and such a tremble all through the small figure that the Trader could not help but see it. From surprise the expression in his eyes softened and he put his hand on Chi-weé's black head.

"How old are you, little girl?" he asked, unexpectedly.

"Seven, I think," answered Chi-weé, in a surprised voice. "My mother tells me—yes, she tells me, seven."

"Ah," said the man, slowly, and the look in his

eyes was far away but very tender, "my little girl would have been seven now.—Yes," he added, suddenly changing his voice, "I will keep the shawl for you, little girl of the mesa, until you bring the rest of the money," and he turned to the others who had entered his store.

Chi-weé felt as if she walked on air as she went to the wagon. The shawl was hers—*hers*—almost! And "almost" was such a *little* word that nearly she forgot it altogether. Those warm, soft folds would rest on her mother's shoulders, and that lovely red would gleam as she walked—and how proud she would feel that *she*, Chi-weé, had bought and paid for it herself—yes, and her heart dropped a little at the thought—but *how* was she going to pay for it herself?

The next month was a very busy one for Chi-weé and a happy one, too, and had her mother not been very occupied with her own work she must have noticed something strange about Chi-weé's actions. She seemed to be hiding something, and there were trips she made into the desert for which she gave no explanation. When the next trading day came there was a bumpy place under the little girl's shawl that had not been there on other trips, and when she handed the Trader a great jar of wild honey her

heart was beating fast with excitement and happiness. She did not tell of the labor she had had in getting it, nor of the painful lump on her arm that told of the angry stinging of a bee, but there was deep pride in her voice as she said:

"I have brought this to pay some more for the shawl—next time I will bring something else."

There was a look she could not understand in the Trader's eyes as he took the honey, but he turned quickly from her and spoke to a white stranger who was standing near. She could not catch the words, and when he turned back to her she still could not understand the look in his eyes.

"I have other shawls," she suddenly heard him saying to her. "You will not mind that this gentleman has bought the blue one with the red underside?"

To Chi-weé it seemed as if the world turned black—her shawl—her precious shawl—to go to this stranger! She could not speak—words would not come—and everything began to swim through the sudden tears in her eyes. She saw the stranger man walk to the door with a bundle under his arm and the Trader turned his back to her to attend to those who waited at his counter. It could not be true—people could not be so cruel as that!

Chi-weé stumbled out of the store and into the waiting wagon with a storm of anger and grief in her heart. But she did not cry. She sat in silence all the way home and tried to think why white people did things that no Indian could ever do.

At their home door her mother called to her to help with the parcels in the wagon.

"And take this great one," she said, "that the white stranger said you had bought from the Trader. With what could you buy, little daughter?"

Chi-weé opened her eyes wide and stood still—what could it mean? Her mother placed a great bundle in her arms, wrapped in white paper. Soft it felt to the touch—soft, like a baby!

She did not wait to think, but tore open the paper, there before her door—and—IT WAS THE SHAWL—*HER* SHAWL! And tied to one corner was a little card with words printed on it in ink—she could read them with difficulty—she wished now she had taken more lessons from the teacher lady at the Mission school.

"It is your love for your mother that has bought this shawl, little girl of the mesa. And it is my love for another little girl like you that gives you back your precious treasure. White hearts are just the same as Indian ones, inside!"

And there, beside the shawl, wrapped in a bit of paper, was her pink shell necklace!

Now Chi-weé *did* cry—but the tears were just for happiness as she hugged the shawl—and her mother—who did not yet understand—and the little pink necklace that had come home again!

She did not know then or afterward whether it was the Trader himself or the white stranger who had given her the shawl, as the Trader would not say, but to Chi-weé it did not matter, for she had learned a great secret—one that you and I know already—that "White hearts are just the same as Indian ones, inside!"

CHAPTER V

CHI-WEÉ AND THE PINYON NUTS

When the gray clouds hang on the mesa top
And hidden for days is the great, round sun,
Then the rains come down with never a stop,
And glad little streams in the desert run.

CHI-WEÉ felt very lonely to-day—somehow there seemed no one to play with in all the pueblo, even Ba-ba, the little goat, hung her head and did not want to do the things she usually did, and now the little girl stood on the edge of the mesa and looked away into the great sweep of desert where the wind was playing tag with the little white-tailed hares. She *knew* that was what it was doing, even though the desert was so far below she could not see even the largest hares, and the whole world looked like a big, soft picture, all hazy in outline and blazing with color. But she knew that when she could smell the odor of distant rain and could see the clouds piling up in white bunches behind the faint blue hills, the

little hares always dodged behind the sage as the wind came whirling around in playful gusts, catching up the tiny pinyon cones and scattering them again with a gay little rattle.

"It was never really lonely in the desert," thought Chi-weé with a sigh, but here it was different.

"Come, Chi-weé, little daughter," called a voice, and Chi-weé turned and walked slowly back into her one-room home, where her mother sat in a corner near the door drawing designs on the pottery jars that she made all day long and sometimes far into the night.

The mother smiled as the little girl entered, and there was understanding in her smile. She did not look up but spoke quietly:

"The wind blew cold from the north last night. Do you not think so, little daughter?"

"Yes," nodded Chi-weé, but with no great interest. "Yes, it was cold, my mother."

"Do you think there was frost in his breath, Chi-weé? Some say there was."

"Yes," answered the little girl again, "there was frost in the house shadows before the sun came up, my mother."

Her mother glanced up then.

"Could you reach the pinyon trees and return before dark, little one?"

Then did Chi-weé open her eyes wide and throw back her head. Now did she understand the words of her mother. Always the first frost opened the pinyon cones and loosened the delicious little nuts, which only waited then the coming of eager hands with sticks and stones to shake them out of their home and gather them from the ground, to make them into many good things to eat—or to eat them just as they were. And the pinyon trees were out in the desert on the edge of the large arroyo, down there where the wind was playing tag with the little white-tailed hares.

"May I go, my mother?" cried Chi-weé, and gone was all the loneliness now. "I will fill my basket, the big one, with the choicest of all the nuts. Oh, may I go *now?*" and she ran to a corner of the room and drew out her newest and best basket from the others and was at the door again with her heart beating fast, and bright, eager eyes.

"Yes—go, little daughter," said the mother, and her eyes, too, were bright. "And see that you are back before the night chill comes."

Chi-weé pressed one of her mother's hands against

her cheek and then was gone like a leaf tossed in the wind. Down the trail she danced, and her thoughts kept time with her flying feet. Past rocks and sharp turns she ran, and even when she reached the desert itself she did not stop. Now she could feel the desert wind in her face and the smell of the sage was good, and more than once she saw the little white bunchy tails of the hares popping into the underbrush and she felt that she was a part of it all and laughed aloud as she ran.

It was quite a distance to the pinyon trees on the arroyo, but it did not take Chi-weé very long to reach them, and sure enough she found some of the nuts on the ground, and when she threw rocks up into the branches more fell. She ate a few and they tasted more delicious than ever before. But there would be plenty of time to gather the nuts, and she sat on the edge of the arroyo and looked down on its smooth, sandy floor.

How clean it looked, and what a lovely place to run! She looked, too, at the steep, sandy sides, but felt sure that she could find a way down—and had no sooner thought of it than she tried!

She found that it was very easy to get down: all she had to do was to start and the sand did the rest.

Chi-weé ran like a deer up the wide white trail.

She slid straight to the bottom and found herself standing on the clean white floor—it looked to be what it really was—the bed of a stream in the time of rains, but very dry now.

How firm it felt under her feet, and how cool and pleasant. Chi-weé threw back her head and ran like a deer up the wide white trail—and did not know that, as she ran, a tiny pool of water lay in each footprint that she left!

On she ran—and on—and on—until finally she stopped, panting for breath, and looked for a place to rest. A twisted old pinyon tree grew right out of the side of the arroyo about a third of the way up and offered just the place she wanted.

Chi-weé scrambled with some difficulty up into its branches and stretched her small length on the welcome trunk. It just seemed to fit her and she lay back in the utmost content, looking up at the blue sky through the twisted old branches.

How quiet it was here, and how beautiful—and how tired she was. . . .

Slowly her eyes grew drowsy and presently she slipped off into a delicious sleep—as easily as she had slipped down the side of the arroyo. . . .

It seemed to Chi-weé that she just closed her eyes

and opened them again, but what strange thing had happened so suddenly?

It was growing dark now and very cold, and what queer sounds were all around her! At first she could not think where she was. Cautiously she lifted her head and looked about her as well as she could. This was a strange place—stranger than she had ever seen!

Above her was sky, gray and soft, and below her was sky, but cold wind, too, and noise. The above sky was still, but the below sky was moving—swiftly, with a rushing sound! And, suddenly, she knew! It was *WATER! THE ARROYO WAS FULL OF WATER*—a wide, wild stream!

She must have slept several hours—all through the afternoon, for she knew the feel and the smell of the twilight wind. And it had rained in the distant hills (she remembered the clouds she had seen), and now the arroyo was a river, she could not guess how deep.

She could not go down again, that was plain, but she must climb up and go home—*quickly*—just as quickly as possible, for her mother would be having anxious thoughts about her.

It was growing darker now and Chi-weé could barely see the sandy bank above her and as she looked

at it her little heart sank, for it curved *in* and offered no sign of hand- or foot-hold and from her tree no tiny ledge or trail led in either direction. It looked very much as if she could *not* get away from her tree, at least until the waters went down, and that might not be for many hours or even days. Chi-weé tried several times to climb up the bank but only slipped back the few feet she could go—the loose sand crumbled under her hands and feet and she knew if she was not very careful she would land in the raging stream below.

She was sobbing now, quietly to herself, and could hardly see the water below for her tears; she tried to cry out but the sound of the water drowned her voice and suddenly she felt very, very miserable and lonely and afraid and starved! She put her hands over her face and lay in the tree, trying to think what to do and trying to forget how lonely and hungry she was.

She could not tell how long she lay there. The sky turned grayer and grayer still, and the sun left a narrow streak of red as he sank in the west. It was rapidly growing black dark.

Then, suddenly, she heard a sound—and sat up in her tree listening. At first she could not tell what it was—a strange sound—high and shrill—and then

she knew that it must be someone singing—a very queer song—someone very near!

Chi-weé cried out as loud as she could—once and then again—and the singing stopped. Then she called again with all the strength of her little lungs, her head thrown back and her eyes searching eagerly the line of dim sage that was all she could see of the upper edge of the arroyo. And then—suddenly, she almost fell backward in her tree—for there, right above her, was a face looking into her own. A face with eyes as wide and surprised as her own, and over the eyes a shock of black hair bound with a red cloth. Farther over the edge came the head and Chi-weé saw that it was a boy—a Navajo boy, a little older than herself, with a very pleasant, friendly face, but he looked as if he could hardly believe what he saw.

"It's just me," called Chi-weé, rather timidly after her first surprise. "I fell asleep in the tree and the waters came. Is there a way, Navajo boy, that you can get me out?"

"Wait!" cried the boy, and his head disappeared from the sage. Chi-weé felt very alone again when he had gone, and her heart beat high with excitement—suppose he should not come back! But in a little while her eagerly watching eyes saw a tiny black

line, that was a little blacker than the gathering shadows, drop down from the edge of the sage. Nearer it came, and nearer—creeping down the sandy bank until it stopped just beyond her farthest reach—and then the head with the red band looked over the bank again.

"Is it enough, little girl? Can you reach the thong?" he cried.

"No," answered Chi-weé, in keen disappointment, "my hand cannot reach to it."

"Wait!" he called again, and drew the line back. In a little it came again—this time the strong hide thong crept closer and closer until Chi-weé caught hold of it and wrapped it about both wrists.

"Do not put *all* your weight on the thong," called the boy. "Climb with your feet and hold to the line."

But Chi-weé did not need this advice—this was something she had done before; and very soon she was up in the sage on the arroyo bank unwrapping the thong from her wrists.

The boy was very gentle and knew just what to do—he carefully rubbed the red lines on her wrists that the thong had made and pushed her down into a seat of springy sage.

"You must have hunger," he said, quietly. "Sit

here and eat," and he took from a little pouch at his belt some dried goat's meat and a seed cake.

Oh, how good they tasted to Chi-weé, and she felt, when he gave her a drink from his gourd water bottle, that no feast had ever been more delicious!

"You are from the mesa?" asked the boy, a little timidly now.

"Yes," answered Chi-weé, "I am from the mesa and my mother will have very anxious thoughts for me. I must go—see, it is dark!" and she rose from her sage seat and looked about her.

Then her eyes opened very wide and her little chin began to tremble.

"But look!" she cried. "How can I get to my home that is on the mesa? Look, we are on the away side of the wash!"

It was true, and for a moment the boy frowned in thought, as he realized they could not cross the stream below them.

Then "Come," he said, "I know a place not so wide—let us go quickly while we can see."

Chi-weé followed him with a growing confidence: there was something in this boy that told her he knew what to do and would help her.

They walked quickly and every little while he

would look down the bank to see if it grew any narrower. It did not seem quite so dark now. Their eyes were growing accustomed to the shadows, and besides, the stars were growing very bright.

In a little while the boy cried out:

"This is the place. I think it will be that we can cross here."

But when they had climbed down a little way they found it much wider than they had thought, from the top they could not see that the water had eaten into the sandy bank and even a grown man could not have crossed—but the sharp eyes of Chi-weé had seen something else farther up the stream.

"What is that dark thing?" she cried. "It looks like a tree." And it was a tree. The water had washed the sand almost entirely away from the spreading roots of a large juniper tree that had been growing in the side of the wash, and it had fallen right across the water in such a way that it made a tree bridge across the stream.

The boy walked across it easily and called to Chi-weé from the other side, but she stood on the great roots and could not make her feet go across. The tree trembled with the water passing under it and gave a great shake once in a while.

"Oh, I cannot," cried Chi-weé; "I will fall in the water!"

The boy laughed at that.

"You will not fall," he said. "Look why you shall not fall"; and he came back across the tree and held out his hand.

Chi-weé took hold of his hand and it felt very strong, and little by little he led her across the shaky bridge—step by step—just a little, little way at a time. At the last she gave a jump and landed in a heap on the right side of the arroyo.

"Oh, it is good to be on this side," she cried. "You have helped me very much"; and she looked at him a little shyly again, and thought how lonely it had been on the mesa that very morning, and other mornings it would be lonely. This boy did not look as if he could be lonely He seemed to know what she was thinking and answered almost her very thoughts.

"I take care of sheep for my mother," he said. "We live over there, on the edge of the desert"; and Chi-weé could see a tiny line of gray smoke rising from some cottonwood trees and a little light that shone there. "I come often here, with my sheep—and it is nice to watch the live things in the desert—

and the sheep. Do you come down from your mesa to this place? Will you come again?"

A happy feeling came into Chi-weé's heart then, and a laugh into her voice.

"Oh, yes," she said. "I have much love for the desert things, and for the sheep. Oh, yes, I shall come to this place"; and like a little wild thing herself, she ran toward the mesa with the speed of the wind. And her heart was very happy, for it told her that she could come again for pinyon nuts and that she had found a new friend!

CHAPTER VI

A BIG ADVENTURE

The wind comes down through the canyon wide,
With the sound and the sweep of wings, of wings,
It gladdens the air of the country side,
And deep in my heart it sings, it sings,
Deep in my heart it sings!

WHAT a difference it did make to have a new one to play with! Chi-weé danced through the little work things she had to do with the thought of happy playtimes ahead—different playtimes! How did the Navajo sheep boy play? And what was his name? That was queer, she did not even know his name. Did he know what she was called? she wondered.

The first time she went out into the desert by the big wash to play with him he was not there and a queer feeling of disappointment came into her heart! But this time she had Ba-ba, the little goat, and they played at sheep-herding all by themselves with sage bushes and rocks for the sheep, and when

the wind blew a big tumbleweed up close to their sheep, that was a coyote come to attack them, and Ba-ba lowered her head and went for him so hard that, instead of the weed tumbling, Ba-ba went over and over in a little ball herself, and Chi-weé had to laugh until the tears came. So it wasn't such a very bad day after all, but the next time she went, it happened that she had left Ba-ba at home on the mesa, and this time she saw the Navajo boy quite awhile before she reached the wash and he saw her, and smiled such a big smile that he showed every white tooth in his head. Then Chi-weé grew suddenly shy and stopped where she was so that he had to come running to meet her.

"Hi! Little girl from the mesa," he cried, when he came close. "Look what a fine day we have to be in the desert! The air is like very good things to eat. Look! how I can jump on a day like this!" And he went high in the air like a young deer, over the top of a bunch of sage.

Chi-weé laughed aloud.

"Look," she said, shyly, when he had come close, "I have something here for when we grow *really* hungry," and she held up a little package for him to see.

"Umm—mm," said the boy. "How quickly I grow hungry! I have pinyon nuts here, too, see," and he showed them to her. "What do they call you, girl from the mesa?—And then, maybe you can tell *my* name!"

"Chi-weé is my name. I do not know Navajo names. How can I tell *your* name?" And Chi-weé felt now as if she had known this boy a long, long time—there was no shyness left at all!

"Three times you can guess," said the boy and held up three fingers of one hand. "Then, if you guess wrong—*maybe* I tell you," and he grinned again.

"Two Navajo names I know—only two that I can think now. Is it Beso-tlanny or Chi-chu-ay-nah-wha?" asked Chi-weé.

The boy threw back his head and laughed. He had such a jolly laugh, the kind that you cannot help joining in. Chi-weé did not see anything at all funny in what she had said but a little giggle began inside her somewhere and before she knew it they were both laughing until the desert rang again with merriment.

"One more," said the boy at last, when he could get his breath, and he danced up and down holding up one finger before her eyes, "But I think I must

tell you—my name is not funny and long like the ones you say—it is little like *this*"; and he marked off one joint of a finger. "So easy—like a sound. Listen—Loki. I like your name, too—it is a bird sound—Chi-weé. Can you stay down in the desert this day, to play?"

Chi-weé gave a little dancing jump, she was so happy.

"I can stay until the sun touches his edge to the earth mother," she cried. "What shall we do—and where are the sheep, Lō'—ki?" and she said the name as if she liked it.

"The sheep are in corral to-day. I do not have the care of them this day—and there are so many things we can do I do not know where to begin first. Shall we gather pinyon nuts or shall we—no—*this* would be best—there is a place where I play many times—a *wonderful* place—but——" he hesitated.

"Yes," said Chi-weé, breathlessly. "Where is this place and what is it?"

"Well," continued Loki, "it is a great way to walk from here. Can you walk much, Chi-weé?"

"*Cha!*" said Chi-weé, "I walk anywhere—to the very end of the world I could walk.—In what way is this place?"

"Look," and Loki pointed, "back to that canyon where this wash comes from. And then up the canyon and a climb to the place—but when you reach the place—— Do you have fear of witches?" he asked, suddenly.

"Fear!" said Chi-weé, and he knew by the way she said it that she was *not* afraid. "My mother tells me, and I know she tells true—that witches are just fear thoughts. *Never* has any one seen a witch and never will they see one. Do *you* have fear, Loki?"

"I will tell you how I have fear. They tell me this place where I play is full of witches and I like to play there best of *all* places. Is that the way people do who fear?"

"No—but let us go, if it is so far," cried Chi-weé, and like the two little wild things they were, they let out a "whoop" and began to run toward the canyon which from the desert could not be seen at all but which they both knew well. Long before they reached it they stopped running and began to walk, and they did not walk fast for, as Loki had said, it was far and they had not much breath left from running. As they came near the canyon they heard, a long way off, the bang of guns.

"Maybe the hunters shoot witches," said Chi-weé with a laugh.

"Oh, there are things to shoot up here," said Loki, "deer and bear and birds and rabbits. Some day soon I will be a great hunter. I am ten now," and he held up the fingers of both hands, "and I will be older before very long."

"Where is this place?" asked Chi-weé, panting a little. "Is it very far, now?"

They were in the canyon now and great rock walls rose all around them. Red sandstone and blue shale and gray granite, and on all sides were great cracks in the walls and smaller side canyons and pillars of rock that stood by themselves like great trees and tents of stone, and when they talked loudly their voices echoed and reëchoed and echoed again from the walls of the canyon, and sounded like big companies of people calling back and forth to each other. It made them feel queer and a little lonely.

"No, the place is not far now," said Loki, pointing to a great crack in a rocky wall a little way ahead. "See, 'way up that crack—it is a place where the little people of the cliffs once lived. My people call it a place of the dead and will not come here,

but I am not afraid, and there are such wonderful things—I have found them in the piles of rock and dust, and have cleaned them to show the nice colors —pieces of jars and stone hammers and grinding places and beads and queer-shaped bones, and there is a great stone that rocks. I think if *two* of us pushed it it might fall down. Shall we push it?"

"Oh, let us go fast!" cried Chi-weé, "I want to see those things!"

And when they reached the place she felt as if Loki had spoken truly, it was even more wonderful than he had said. Up a sort of long slant they climbed; it was of broken rock that seemed to have fallen from the cliff higher up and there were very large rocks that had fallen, too. The slant led up to a queer stone house built right across the great crack. It was painted white and looked very new, but Loki said it was almost as old as the cliff itself. It had a low door and one window at the side that was very small, and beside the door was the rocking stone that Loki had spoken of. When he touched it it *did* move and Chi-weé cried out:

"Do not do that, Loki. Look, if it falls the house will be shut and we cannot get in the door!"

They climbed up a sort of long slant that led to a queer stone house.

And it was true, it leaned right toward the doorway and if it had fallen would have closed the cliff house like a lid on a box.

"But I could get in without a door," said Loki. "See me," and he climbed to a little higher shelf of rock and squeezed through the tiny window. It did not look nearly large enough, but he got through very quickly and called to her from the inside.

"Come in, Chi-weé, and see what is here!"

There were old, old pottery jars almost whole and with strange designs on them, different from any Chi-weé had ever seen, and beads made in queer shapes—little animals and frogs and tiny, fat babies some seemed to be—that had once been strung on strings of hide but the strings had long ago dried into dust. And there were little bone awls with the polish still bright on them and stone dishes hollowed out for food, and pounding and grinding stones, and in one place in a great jar was a pile of bones—Chi-weé shuddered a little at that.

"*Those* I do not like very much," she said. "We will not touch those, but oh, look at *these!*" In a little flat dish she had found some beads made of shells and they were still pink and white and the color of gold. "*I* know a little girl, a little long-ago

girl had these—look, they are very like my own pink necklace but not so pretty as mine."

"You take them home," said Loki, "and put them on a fresh string, and if you do not care to wear them maybe you have a friend who will."

"Oh," cried Chi-weé, "I know the one! She has no beads, and these will make her very happy." Then she saw something that gave her a quick thought. "Look at this little flat stone, Loki. It looks like a place to eat on. Now, shut your eyes—no—do not look——" and quickly as she could she spread out on the stone the little package of food that she had brought—dried apricots and piki bread and two little sweet seed cakes. She was very excited. It was not often that she was away from home for so long a time and she felt as if she were living in a dream.

"Is it time to look yet?" asked Loki, sniffing the air with his eyes still closed. "It smells very good, and inside me is more empty than a gourd rattle."

Chi-weé laughed and clapped her hands.

"*Now!*" she cried. "See what the witch has brought you!"

Loki opened his eyes and grinned, first at Chi-weé and then at the food; it was the kind he liked best.

"Oh, that kind of witch is good," he said. And they had such a jolly meal together in the queer cliff house, and if there had been any witches about they would certainly have been frightened away for they say if there is one thing a witch cannot stand it is a laugh that comes straight from the heart!

They had just eaten the last crumb of food when Chi-weé raised her head suddenly.

"What is that queer noise?" she asked, in a startled voice. "And it comes nearer and nearer."

Loki, too, was listening and a strange look came into his face. He seemed to grow very white suddenly. Then he moved so quickly that it seemed he made only one movement with his arms, but he had Chi-weé close beside him in the darkest corner of the room.

"Make no noise," he breathed into her ear. "It is a great bear—perhaps he will pass this place if we make no noise."

Chi-weé felt her flesh grow cold. That was the sound she had heard, the bear scrambling up the loose rock of the long slope and puffing and blowing as if he had come a long way. How could he go past the place where they were when there was nowhere else to go up this great crack? He could not

climb the sides, they were straight up and down; he could go nowhere but right into this room where they sat awaiting him. She felt her heart begin to beat very fast and Loki held her hand so tight that it hurt. Nearer and nearer came that sound, nearer and nearer—she could not think very clearly—how suddenly things happen! Only a moment ago they had been so happy, she and Loki, and she had thought there would be many more of these happy playtimes, and now—— Her mother would be very sorry when she learned what had happened, and Ba-ba would miss her. "I think the whole desert will miss me," she thought, miserably, "and there is Loki and his sheep, and his mother—— Oh, it is very very wrong for such things to happen."

Nearer and nearer came those dreadful sounds, and now the bear was at the very door. His great bulk shut out the light of day and it seemed he could not see them in the dark corner. Chi-weé closed her eyes for a minute to see if she could think more clearly that way. What could she do?—What could she do? Loki seemed turned into stone. Was it because he was frightened or just that he could not think of something to do? "But always, *always* there is something to do," thought Chi-weé. "Oh,

if only the Great Spirit would tell me what it is." Then, quick as thought—"The *window!*" she cried. "The window, Loki!"

The bear was now sticking his head far into the room and sniffing the unexpected odor of human beings. He was growling in an ugly way that grew louder and uglier every moment.

But as quickly as Chi-weé had spoken the words the two were at the little open window space and scrambling through. The sound and movement startled the bear and for a moment it seemed he did not know whether to go in or turn around and face them outside, but the darkness of the room finally decided him to go inside, and he gave a final, louder growl and entered.

The two had yet to pass the door before they could get away, and Loki hesitated for a breath.

"He will maybe follow us," he said. "If he is hungry he will follow us." But Chi-weé did not hear him, she was pushing at the great rocking stone by the door.

"Quick!" she panted. "Push, too——" and together they pushed until they felt that it was the whole cliff wall they were trying to bring down. For a time that seemed long the stone did not move,

and then, suddenly, with a crashing noise, it fell in front of the doorway and a great cloud of dust went up so that, for a little while, they could not see the house. In the noise of the falling rock they could not be sure, but they thought they heard a howl from the caged bear.

"Oh," cried Chi-weé, and she felt so weak in her knees she had to sit down on a rock—"oh, how *lucky* that stone was there!"

Loki was still standing by the place where the stone had been and his face was yet very pale.

"That was a hungry bear," he said, finally. "I know more of bears than girls know—he was hungry and he was mad. If there are witches in this place they are good witches and take much care of little ones. Come, let us get down—we have far to go."

He was very grave now and did not seem like the same boy who had laughed so happily a little while before.

"What will that bear do?" asked Chi-weé. "Shall we bring food to him to eat, soon? We could not let him die in a cage even if he is a very bad bear."

"We will think about it as we go," said Loki. "The sun is low, do you not see?"

In silence they scrambled down the long slant of

loose rock and then away through the canyon where the shadows were gathering fast. They had not meant to be out so late, and both began to go more quickly as they noticed the blue of the sky turning to a rosy lavender and then to pink. When they had gone only a little way they heard voices, several men talking; white men speaking in the white tongue. Loki held up his hand and they both stopped and listened.

The men were standing just around a great rock and did not see them.

"Well, I'm sorry he got away," said one. "He looked like a big, fine fellow. But it would be like hunting for a needle in a haystack to try to find him in this tangle of side canyons."

"I sure hate to go back without a hide to show," said another voice. "Darn poor luck, I call it. I thought you said you were a good shot, Pete."

"Never you mind," answered the one called Pete. "You've missed lots better chances than I had at that critter—he never was near enough even to see the real color of his skin."

Loki looked at Chi-weé and his eyes were shining; then he stepped forward to where the men were standing. There were four of them and they looked

at him sharply as he came near, but he spoke quickly before they could say a word.

"Is it a bear you talk about?" he asked, eagerly. The men exchanged glances; then the one they had called Pete answered.

"What do *you* know about it?" he asked.

"I come down the canyon, with—a—friend, when I hear you talk. Do you want this bear very much?"

The man threw back his head and laughed heartily.

"Listen to the child," he cried. "Do you want the bear very much?—What do you say to that—do we or don't we? It's up to you fellows!"

"Well," said the man Loki had first heard speak, "this boy must have seen the bear and knows where he is hiding—how about it, sonny?" he asked, turning to Loki. "You want us to pay you for telling where he is—is that it?"

Loki hesitated. "If I catch him for you, in safe place—that would be worth money—I think?"

Again Pete threw back his head and "haw-hawed" until the echoes rang.

"Listen to him! What do you think of that? A little tike like him—catch him for us!—But *sure!*" he added, "that *would* be worth money. Come on, boys—be game. If that's what he wants,

tell him how much it would be worth. How much do *you* think?" he asked Loki, still with a wide twinkle in his eyes, and it was plain he took the whole matter as a huge joke.

Loki looked down and pushed the sand of the canyon floor with his foot; then he looked up.

"Five dollars," he said, bravely, and looked at the four of them with a spark of defiance in his eyes.

"Say, what's this all about, anyway?" said one of the men. "Do you fellows think that bear's gonna *wait* somewheres until we come and catch him? S'posen this boy *did* see him, that don't mean he's there *yet*."

"I said he is in safe place," said Loki. This white-man talk did not come easy when he grew excited, and he was growing excited now, and a little angry. These men, plainly, did not believe him.

"If you come, I will show him," he said again, and distinctly. "And then you pay me."

"Come on, fellows, and let's see what it's all about, anyway," cried Pete. "But it's almost dark now. How far have we to go, boy, to find this bear of yours? You needn't worry about the pay—*that'll* be coming along all right if you've a bear to show."

"He is here—pretty near," said Loki, pointing

up the canyon. "You see him before the dark come."

"Forward march!" cried Pete, and with good-natured jokes and a laugh or two the others followed.

Chi-weé waited, big-eyed, around the corner where Loki had left her. She knew the men would see her, and she did not know whether to stand still where she was or to run to the shelter of some darker place where they would pass her without discovery. While she hesitated, Pete caught sight of her and stopped still.

"Who have we here?" he cried in his big voice that was somehow full of laughing sounds. "Say, boys, if it isn't little Pocahontas, herself!"

Loki stepped forward quickly.

"That is my friend," he said, stiffly. "Her name is Chi-weé. That—that other name she has *not!*"

"Oh, that's all right," said Pete, gravely. "No offence meant"; and he gave a big wink to the other men that Loki did not see. "*Sure* she's your friend, and say—I wish she was mine, too. Won't you shake, little girl?"

There was something about him that took all the fear from Chi-weé. These were not bad men, she knew that instantly. They would do no harm to

her or to Loki, and perhaps—there was new excitement in the thought—perhaps they would do much good. She came forward gravely and put her little hand in the big one of the man. He smiled at her very kindly and then patted her on the head. The other men, too, smiled, and Chi-weé felt very happy until she looked at Loki. *He* was not smiling and he did not look kindly at the men.

"The night is very near," he said. "Soon no one can see and you will not believe what I have told you."

"Right you are!" cried Pete, and now without words they walked quickly up the canyon, Chi-weé following a little way behind the others and keeping her eyes on Loki.

They came pretty soon to the slanting place of loose rock, and Loki stopped and pointed upward.

"The bear is up there," he said. "In that place of little cliff people."

"Well, hang it, if I don't believe the boy was telling the truth," said one of the men. "But I don't see yet how he got a bear in that place, and if he *is* there why he doesn't come out."

Loki felt very angry now and his voice trembled a little as he spoke.

"Navajo boy never tell lies," he said. "The bear is in that place—a rock is where the door is—*she* put it there"—pointing to Chi-weé—"and I helped. Go now, and see."

With an incredulous look at both the little girl and the boy, the men scrambled up to the house. They examined the rock at the doorway and peered around it, listening. Then they went to the little window and strained their eyes into the darkness.

"He's in there, all right," Chi-weé heard one man say. "Blamed if I see how it was done, but they sure have a bear in there."

"Well, well, well," said Pete, as they all came sliding down again into the canyon. "You win, boy. How you did it is beyond me, but here is the pay—you've sure earned it." He reached down into his trouser pocket and drew out a crumpled bill. Loki held it in his hand and there was an expression of sharp dismay in his eyes.

"What's the trouble now?" asked the man.

Loki hesitated. "It is only *one* piece," he said. "The money is for *two*."

"O-oh, I see!" laughed the man. "Give it back here a minute." And after much searching of pock-

ets and purses, five dollars in silver was found and handed to Loki. Still the look of trouble was in his eyes as he looked in silence at the pile of money in his hands.

"Say!" called one of the men. "Divide it for him, you blunderhead! Don't you see the boy doesn't know how to make the change?" And it was true. Loki would not have said it, but the great handful of silver coins was a puzzle to him. Half of the pieces he could have counted, but he knew that they did not all mean the same thing, and he was very grateful when the man took it from him and made two neat little piles and said:

"These may not *look* the same, sonny, but each of them will buy *exactly* the same as the other."

Loki rewarded him with a bright flash of his teeth and ran to Chi-weé.

"This is for you," he said, in a low voice, pouring into her hands one of the piles of silver coins, and his voice shook with excitement as he spoke. "It may be we will get more from these men, if we can help them in some other way. I *told* you I would be a hunter—maybe the time has come!"

Chi-weé's hands trembled as she received the money in both little fists.

"We must go," she whispered. "It is very late —we must go, Loki."

The men had been watching them with looks of amusement and now one of them called out:

"You had better run home, you two—the supper bell must have rung a long, long time ago. And say, boy—we may need help in the morning getting the bear out of this trap of yours. Suppose you meet us here a little after sun-up."

Loki was very happy now and he smiled as he answered:

"I will come. Good-night, white men!"

And he and Chi-weé turned and ran down the canyon followed by a cheerful—"Good-night, kiddies," from all the men.

"I like those men," said Chi-weé, happily, as they ran. "They are good."

"Yes, they are good," echoed Loki, and his heart was very light.

Queer shadows stretched themselves across the canyon and out into the desert as they raced along, and the smell of the sage touched by the night wind was strong and sweet. There were strange rustlings in the air as of bats and many night things and the

little star brothers came out and twinkled down at them kindly.

When they came to the parting of their ways, Chi-weé was panting and breathless but she managed to say:

"To-morrow—come to the foot of the mesa—when they have caught that bear—and tell me——"

"Yes," nodded Loki, "I will come."

The trail up the mesa side seemed very steep that night, and Chi-weé felt that if home had been one bit farther away she could not have reached it.

Her two little fists were full of silver coins and she could not open the door when she came to it, so she banged on it with all her might and called to her mother within.

"It is Chi-weé—and I am very tired—please to open, my mother."

The door came open very suddenly, as if one had been waiting long to hear that voice. So suddenly did it open that it caught Chi-weé quite unprepared, and she stumbled into the room and fell forward on the floor, the silver coins rolling and jingling to every corner of the room. But she was not hurt and jumped to her feet laughing.

"O-o-o-OH! Such big eyes my mother has!" she cried. "And how much *bigger* they will grow when I tell you!"

And bigger and bigger grew those same eyes as the mother was told the wonderful story of the day. But the eyes of Chi-weé, after a while (not a very *great* while!), began to grow strangely heavy—and when she had eaten the supper her mother prepared, she was very glad to be tucked into her warm little blankets—and watch the dance of the fire shadows on the wall for a little while—and—then——

Only the mother, who watched, knows what came after that!

CHAPTER VII

THE GHOST IN THE KIVA

The old owl cries in the pinyon tree,
The Coyote off on the hill—
The Gray Ghost calls through the night to me,
And surely his call is ill!

The sun peeps up on a world of gold;
The wind blows clear and free,
Oh, gone is the ghost that called so bold,
That called through the night to me!

SUCH a very strange thing had happened to Chiweé! She was so frightened that she trembled. This was something that had never happened to a little girl before: she was down in the Kiva—the Kiva where no child was ever allowed to go—where *no* one went but the wise old medicine men of her people, and sometimes the young men when there was a council called. And now she could not get out, for someone was coming!

This morning had been so different from all other mornings. When first she had opened her eyes at daylight she had been thinking about Loki and what

he would have to tell, and later her thoughts had not been on the things she was doing and that was what had brought the trouble.

It was easy enough to do her work—that she could do without thinking at all—the milking of Ba-ba and brushing her long hair for the day; cleaning the one room of their home and grinding some corn for piki bread and shaking out the dust in the blankets and folding them on the bed place—all that was very easy, and then she had taken the corn-cob doll her mother had made her (it was a very nice doll with a painted face and a bit of bright blanket wrapped around it and a string of tiny beads about its neck!), and they had gone out to the edge of the mesa where they could look over toward the canyon where Loki had gone and think again what might be happening right now, out there.

They had gone up on top of the Kiva because that was the best place from which to see, as it was on the outside of all the houses, and Chi-weé had leaned against the long ladder ends that reached up from the dark inside and held the doll up still higher that it might see if Loki was yet returning. And then—she did not know *yet* how it had happened—but the doll had dropped from her hands and had

fallen down, down into that dark hole, into the Kiva where no one but the medicine men could go —and without thinking what she did, Chi-weé put her feet on the ladder, and down *she* went after the doll! If only she had come right out—if only she *had—but she did not come right out!*

It was very dark down in that place at first. She stood still and could see nothing. Then gradually, gradually she could see a little—and then a little more—and then a little more—— And what she saw made her take a step forward and draw a very long breath.

For a long moment she stood still and listened, and a little voice spoke somewhere near her ear—or was it inside her?

"You are here now, Chi-weé. No one has seen you. Just one good look and you can go, and no one will know!" She had heard that voice before, but never had it spoken words that made her squirm so with curiosity! Surely it could not be very bad just to look! She would touch nothing—and no one would ever know—that was the best part—they never could know!

So she listened to the voice—it frightened her—but she listened! And she istened for anv sounds

that might come from outside, too, but this was not a day for ceremony and she knew (she *thought* she knew!) that no one would come to the Kiva.

Then she crept forward slowly and looked around (for if you once *listen* to that voice that tells you to do things you know are not right, you *always* do what it says!). She looked and looked. This was different from any of the houses in the pueblo, different from *any* houses she had ever seen. The room was large and square, with white posts reaching up to the beams that ran across the ceiling. She could see a low stone bench all along the wall on three sides, but on the fourth side, the side that faced the ladder, was the thing that attracted her excited attention right away. It looked like many beautiful dolls standing together. As she came near she saw they really were big wooden dolls painted in wonderful bright colors, and she remembered that she had seen men carrying these in some of the dances. She knew that they were supposed to be images of the good spirits or gods of her people (she knew no other name to call them). She knew that there was only one Great Spirit, but she was taught that He sent His blessings through many earth things—the rain, the sunshine, the springs, the grain—and these

images were made to look like them. Some were like butterflies and birds, and some were corn maidens, and others had cloud and rain symbols on them. There were a great many of these, but there were other things, too, almost as interesting. Bowls of pottery were piled high with sacred meal and pollen and grains; ears of corn and melons and squashes in a sort of design on a high stone place, and in front of this high place, on the floor, was a beautiful picture made from colored sand. She got down on her hands and knees to examine this picture and *then*——

She heard a sound—someone was coming! Someone was on the roof of the Kiva and had put a foot on the ladder—and Chi-weé's heart seemed to jump straight into her throat and stay there!

What should she do? What would they do to her if she was caught in the Kiva? How many times her mother had told her what a wicked thing it would be for a child to go into the Sacred Kiva where prayers were made for rain and for growing things and for recovery of those who had sickness.

The foot came down another step on the ladder—there was the doll still lying on the floor. Chi-weé jumped to her feet without noise, grabbed the doll, and then crouched down behind the place where

there were most of the painted figures. She did not know whether the figures really hid her or not, she could only try her best to stay still and hope that whoever came would be quick and go out again before they could see plainly in that dark place.

Down the ladder he came—a step at a time—someone who was singing under his breath but did not try to be quiet with his feet. Nearer and nearer came those feet, and now they were down in the room and someone was walking slowly toward the altar where she was hidden, someone who peered forward into the gloom and still sang the words of a song that, to her, did not make sense. Chi-weé could hear the words plainly.

"Aouw—Aouw—Hawk, he flying—
Aouw—Aouw—Snake, he lying—
Aouw—Aouw—Hot wind sighing—
Out in the desert, for old Chan!"

And then Chi-weé drew a great breath of relief—it was only old Chan—the man who did not think with his head! She was not afraid of *him!* He did no harm to any one and would not tell that he had seen her down in the Kiva if she asked him not to. How glad she was that it had not been someone else, and she raised up just a little bit from her

crouching position. Bang! went one of the wooden figures straight on its face on the floor and Chi-weé gave a little startled cry.

With a terrible yell—the very loudest and most terrifying that Chi-weé had ever heard—Chan turned and went scrambling up the ladder very much faster than he had come down. Yell after yell came from his lips as he ran, and now Chi-weé could make out words too.

"The Shindi!" he shouted. "The Shindi has come after me! He is in the Kiva—a long tail and horns he has—and fire comes out of his mouth!"

Chi-weé stood very still. Just for a moment she did not understand what it could all be about. Why did Chan cry about the "Shindi?"—a very bad sort of a man witch. *She* had seen no witch—she knew there was no such thing—and then—she KNEW! "It is me!" she said aloud. "He did not see me in the dark—and I am what he thought was the Shindi!" But it did not seem funny to Chi-weé, for now she could hear many people coming to the Kiva —the cry of old Chan was still loud and fearful.

"He grabbed for me—LOOK! Where the Shindi tore at my belt! And he has a face terrible to see!"

The sound of many voices now came down the

ladder hole and Chi-weé grew more frightened than she had been before. Now, surely, she would be discovered and some terrible thing would happen to her.

She tried in great haste to stand up the wooden figure again and a little round cup of something on the stone altar tipped over and poured on her face and head. Everything wrong was happening this day, and she began to sob, 'way down inside her where they could not hear; and now the voice spoke again in her ear, but this time it said:

"You did that which your mother told you was wrong—you did that which the law told you was wrong. That is why bad things have happened—that is why bad things *always* happen—when you do not mind those who *know!*" And she knew that it was so, but it only made her more miserable now to know it. "Never—NEVER will I do it again," she sobbed. "But, oh, I wish *this* time I had not done it!"

A foot appeared again on the ladder and then another, and as these came down, others—more and more! Chi-weé, at the very first one, had crouched down again behind the images where she had hidden before, though she felt that they could not hide her for long.

It seemed that all the men of the pueblo came down the ladder, and soon the whole room was full. They were talking excitedly and peering this way and that.

"It is strange," said the voice of old Lampayo—a voice that Chi-weé knew and loved, for always he was kind to her—"It is strange that the Shindi, who is bad, should come to a place of prayer—where only good is. That is a thing I do not understand."

"Look at this," cried another. "The beautiful prayer picture in the sand—it has been trampled upon."

"This is bad. This is bad," again said the voice of old Lampayo.

"Fire—he breathed out fire!" cried Chan again, who had come down with the others. He would not have come down by himself for all the world, but he was very brave when all the men of the pueblo were there with him, but even then he would not go near the altar.—"He breathed out fire and great horns were on his head!"

The men talked excitedly together with strange, sidelong glances at the painted figures on the altar, but no one came very near yet—it was plain there was great fear among them.

And then Chi-weé gave a little sob! She could not

help it—it came out by itself before she knew what was going to happen. The men started and stronger fear shone in many faces; some ran for the ladder and there was much confusion.

Chan gave a howl such as he had given at first.

"AUOW!" he cried. "Let me out! He is still here—the Shindi is still here. Let me out!" and he made a jump for the ladder and scrambled up and out of the place, still howling like a wild thing.

Chi-weé sobbed again and louder—and a strange new look came on the face of old Lampayo. He stood in front of the others and pushed them back from the altar place with both arms.

"Wait," he called in a grave, clear voice. "I will see—it is my place to see what has come to our Kiva altar. Up—up—all of you! Leave the place alone to me!"

There was murmuring against this and many would have stayed in the room to see what was there. but the word of Lampayo was law, and with much grumbling they went up at last, all of them, and the room was left empty—except for old Lampayo and a little sobbing figure behind the altar.

"Come!" cried the old man, sternly, when they were alone. "Come out and tell me why this is."

Chi-weé came from behind the altar place and the tears were rolling down her face. She did not know how strange she looked, for the little bowl that had tipped over on her had been filled with sacred meal and all her head and face were a strange, powdery white except for the smears her tears had made.

The eyes of Lampayo went very wide when he saw her and the corners of his mouth twitched but the tone of his voice was stern and he did not smile as he spoke.

"Tell me why you have done this. You know well the law of the Kiva, Chi-weé. This is a very wicked thing you have done."

And in a little wailing voice choked with sobs he was told the story of the doll and even of the voice that whispered in her ear.

His old eyes softened as he listened and his arms went around the little girl—since she was born they had been the best of friends.

"But it was wrong," he said, as sternly as he could; "you know it was wrong, Chi-weé. Never must you again go against the law or the word of your mother."

"Oh, never—never—NEVER!" cried Chi-weé,

and Lampayo knew that she would not—not for a long time!

He carried her up the ladder into the sunlight above, and those who were gathered there waiting cried out as they saw her.

"It is a ghost!" they said at first, but very soon they saw who it was, and some were very angry that so little a child should have fooled them.

"Chi-weé," said her mother's voice, and Chi-weé shrank at the tone of it. "Thou shalt be punished!"

"No," said old Lampayo, and he held the little girl back. "The gods of the altar have punished her enough. And look! See how she is now a daughter of the ghost clan! She has been punished, I say, and has learned much. She and I alone know how much. See that she is not punished more."

Her mother looked at her wonderingly then, and Chi-weé felt the happiness come back into her heart. Oh, from now she would *always* be good—and there were still Loki and Ba-ba. She smiled then, and a voice called out:

"Look! How she has the very face of the clown in the butterfly dance!"

And Chi-weé hid her face with her hands and ran

to her house to wash off the white meal—and there was a great laugh from those who saw her run.

"Hi-yi!" shouted one then, "where is the Shindi? He had great horns and a tail, and fire came from his mouth! Oh, what big lie talk from Chan—and where is that Chan?" But though they hunted high and low in all the pueblo, Chan was not to be found. And for all that day, no one saw him. But in the evening, very late, when all the town had gone to sleep, Chan came slinking cautiously up the trail—so quietly that not even a dog awoke to bark at him—and crept into the little room that was his home and drew the blankets up to his very eyes. And then, for the first time in many hours, little by little, the fear thoughts went away from him, and dream thoughts took their place, and old Chan slept in peace.

CHAPTER VIII

THE RETURN OF LOKI

Hark, Little Brother! The wind's soft croon,
As the night sweeps down like a hawk to nest,
And the mother bird twitters a sleepy tune
Calling her birdlings home to rest!

Look, Little Brother! The West's gold glow
Fades from its splendor to softest gray,
And over the night trail starlets go,
With tiny torches to light the way!

LOKI did not come that night to the foot of the mesa, though Chi-weé waited for him until the stars came out, and she went slowly back up the trail with a little frown of wonder between her eyes. What could have happened?

She had very strange and bad dreams that night —of gray ghosts with long bushy tails, and bears that shot fire out of their mouths, and a great tall man with the face of Loki who would run from her and peek at her from behind trees as she passed. And in the morning she was still wondering what

had happened back there in the canyon where Loki and the white men were.

She was very quiet all day long and did not dance and sing about her little tasks as she usually did, and her mother knew of what she was thinking and did not bother her with questions.

Many times she ran to the edge of the mesa from which she could see the place near the end of the trail where she knew Loki would come, but she did not see him. Then, when it was almost night again, she went slowly down the trail and did not look out into the desert for fear it would be empty as it had been every other time, and she did not want that feeling of disappointment to come until it *had* to—but this time the desert was *not* empty—and when she reached the foot of the trail she saw Loki coming! He was running, with tired feet but a very excited face, and before he reached her he called out:

"I have a great story to tell you! And look at this!" He held up a silver dollar for her to see. "But let me get a drink now—I am dry—the inside of me, like a sandy wash in the season of no rains!"

Chi-weé laughed and ran with him to the spring. She could laugh very easily again now. *Now* every-

thing was right, and her eyes sparkled as she held the gourd for him to drink.

"But, such a great, long time you have been gone, Loki," she said. "What big thing did you do—out there with those men? And me——" She looked down and her face grew pink. "A thing happened at this place, too"; and she told him of the Ghost in the Kiva. She looked at him strangely when she had finished. Would he laugh or say she had been bad? But he did not—he was grave and said:

"That Chan tells great lies." Chi-weé was very happy that he did not laugh, and then she forgot her own happenings altogether and began to jump up and down in her excitement.

"Oh, tell me, Loki—tell me—what is that story—and what did those men do? And that bear—? You will drink this spring all dry—no——" And, laughing, she held the gourd away from him. "When you tell me—you will have more."

But Loki searched about for a good seat, and after he had found one on a flat rock, sat down very slowly, grinning up at her. He was in no great hurry to begin his story, as he enjoyed very much the feeling of being important for a little while. But the slower he was the more excited grew Chi-weé

and when he saw a little quiver in her lip, he did not tease any more.

"Well," he began, and then Chi-weé grew very quiet and sat down with her hands held tight in her lap. "Two suns ago I started very early in the morning—before the day came—and went to that canyon that you know. The men, those white men, were there. They were very happy and laughed a lot. They do not laugh like our men—their jokes I do not understand."

"I know," nodded Chi-weé.

"And then," went on Loki, "we went up that canyon," and this is the story Loki told to Chi-weé.

It was clear and cold in the early morning when the four white men and the little Indian boy started up the canyon, and they were all in good spirits. The canyon was very beautiful in the early sunrise and the air made you feel as if you had no feet at all and could almost fly! There was no stream in the canyon but Loki knew that right under the damp sand of the floor was plenty of water, so they did not need to carry any.

They looked up at the rocky walls as they passed and could see several places where there might have been cliff houses at one time but the rocks had broken

down and there were not even ruins left. It was not very far to the place where the bear was caught and Loki grew excited as they drew near. How would they catch him, he wondered.

"Navajo boy can't shoot bear," he said at last, very gravely, to one of the men. "No Navajo will shoot bear—or hurt bear. It is very bad."

"*We*'ll do that part," said the man, laughing. (Always, thought Loki, these men were laughing at nothing at all.) "But you caught him, you know," said the man, more seriously, "and I'd give my hat to know how."—"Say!" said Pete, "suppose you tell us that right now," and they all slowed down a little and drew curiously near to Loki to listen. He did not like that very much and felt the red blood come into his face as they looked at him, but very slowly and in the best white-man talk he knew, he told them just what had happened—especially he told them about Chi-weé, and they said many nice things about her then, and Pete cried:

"I wish there were more little white girls like that," and then he gave Loki the silver dollar and said, "You give this to Chi-weé and tell her Pete sent it to her and wants her to buy something pretty from

the Trader's store the next time she goes there—and, say—I'd like mighty well to have her tell me what she buys—you tell her that, too." And then they all noticed suddenly that they were right below the cliff place with the long slant of loose rock.

The men talked a little about what they would do, and scrambled up to the house. It was just exactly as they had left it, so they knew no one had been there to disturb the bear in the night. They could hear him, too, moving about inside as if he was very much excited and wanted to get out. They tried the stone at the door and found that two of them, pushing together, could move it away. Then they decided how they would stand and shoot the bear as he came out.

Loki listened to all they had to say but did not say anything himself, and he looked in the window of the cliff house, but it was too dark inside to see the bear.

Finally everything was settled and two of the men got their guns ready while two of them prepared to push the rock away, and Loki climbed to the top of the cliff house and watched with great interest what the men were doing. At last they gave a

little signal, and quickly the rock was pushed away from the door and the men jumped to one side, all of them ready to shoot the moment the bear came out—but he did not come out! He seemed to know what was waiting for him just outside the door and did not move from the dark corner where the men could not see him. He growled a little so they knew he was there, but that was all. They came carefully near the door but the bear must have been close to the wall in the corner just inside, for they could not see him and they could not shoot into that corner. They threw some stones into the room but that only made him growl louder and he did not show himself.

Then Loki called to the men:

"If you will light a little fire stick to some other sticks and throw them in the window, he will come out." And one of the men nodded up at him and said:

"I've got something here better than sticks"; and he took a big paper out of his pocket and lighted it with a match (that was what Loki called a "fire stick") and made it into a big ball and threw it into the room. There was a great snarling growl then and a big black creature shot out of the door and

down the slanting rock place, and at the same moment the bang of three guns made such a roar in the canyon that Loki felt that *he* had been shot instead of the bear!

But he did not have time for many thoughts, for all four men slid and scrambled down the rocky place and were after the bear before the echoes of that big shot had stopped rumbling back and forth from the canyon walls.

Loki, too, climbed down from the cliff-house roof and followed them as fast as his legs could go. For the bear had not dropped dead as they all had expected him to do, though several drops of blood on the stones showed that one, at least, of the shots had hit him, but he had gone down the canyon at such a pace as showed he was very much alive and would still lead them a great chase.

They did not get another chance to shoot at him as he immediately disappeared in what seemed a forest of great rocks and boulders, though for a while they could follow him by the trail he left on the canyon floor. But this trail seemed to disappear altogether at about noontime, when the sun was straight overhead, and they all stopped for a breathing time and to decide what to do.

"He went *that* way," said Loki, pointing up a side canyon.

"Well, maybe," said one of the men, wiping the perspiration from his face with a big red bandanna handkerchief. "Maybe so, and maybe not. I'm for dividing here, and two go each way, so we'll *shore* get him. What say, boys?"

"We'd better keep moving anyway," said another. "For Pete's sake don't let's lose him after all we've done!"

"Here—here!" said Pete, pretending to be angry. "Be careful how you use my name, there! But say, boys—we're the prize shots all right! Who'd a-thought we could *all* miss a mark like that at such close range!"

"We didn't *all* miss," said one of the others. "If *I* hadn't hit him we would never have had a chance to follow him at all, he would have gone so fast. He's wounded, that's what—and I'm the fellow that did it!"

"*You!*" jeered the other three—and then Loki broke in quietly.

"If we go—maybe we get him. If stay here—he get away sure!"

"Right-o!" cried Pete. "And what's more, if

you say he went up this side canyon, that's where *I'm* going!" and he started off. The others hesitated only a moment and then followed.

All that afternoon they walked, and very hungry and tired they grew, all of them, but they knew they were on the right trail, for every once in a while they came to a print in the damp sand and in one place was a little spot of blood, proving again that the bear *was* wounded.

"He can't go on for ever," said Pete, when they came to this place. "He is probably a lot more tired than we are if he is wounded." And then, just a very few minutes after this, they found him—all in a heap—and he was dead.

The men gathered around the bear and gave a big sigh of relief. They were very tired and hungry but they had what they had come so far to get, and they were happy.

"Great jumping grasshoppers!" cried Pete. "But he's a whopper, boys! And why do you suppose he ran so far after he was wounded?"

"I know!" said Loki, suddenly. No one had noticed him in the excitement of finding the bear, and his words came so suddenly and unexpectedly as almost to make them jump. But he was pointing

to a dark hole in the side of the canyon wall almost hidden by great boulders and broken rock. "I saw something move in that place," he said. "I think it is home of this bear."

The men immediately forgot that they were tired and hungry, and with a short, "The mate, boys!" from Pete, they crept forward with their guns ready, to see what it was that had moved in the cave.

It was very quiet now, and as they drew near they could hear a little whining noise. Loki knew what that noise was—it was hungry little bear cubs crying for their mother.

"All right," he cried to the men then, "watch outside for bear! But inside only cubs!" and they found this was true. Two little baby cubs looked at them curiously as they came to the mouth of the cave, but did not stop their hungry whimpering.

"Say, but they're cute!" cried one of the men. "Let's take them back home."

Loki did not say anything, but he did not look pleased. These men did not know much about bears and a mother bear was very bad to fight. It was plain to him that this was the father bear they had killed and the mother had gone out to look for him when he was gone so long. But she would come

back, and perhaps when they were not expecting her —it was not good to take the little bears away. But Loki knew the white men would do just as they pleased and so he said nothing.

They made a little camp then, not very far from the cave, and Loki helped to gather sticks for the fire and piles of brush for beds to sleep on, for the night was near and the men had no thought of trying to go home before the morning. They cooked a supper over the fire and Loki watched the strange things they did with food, but it tasted very good to him when it was ready, for it was different from the kind the Navajos ate and different from any he had ever tasted. There was white bread with butter on it (he knew what that was, but had never tasted it before). Then they opened little tin cans and took many good things out of them: chopped meat tied in skin, and red tomatoes, and peaches with much juice in them—very sweet and good. (When he told Chi-weé about it, she remembered that she had had no supper and her hunger was suddenly very great!) There was milk in cans, too, and the men let Loki taste some of it—he thought it *much* better than fresh goat's milk.

After supper the men sat around the fire for a

while and played with the little cubs; they fed them bits of bread soaked in milk and peach juice and the cubs seemed quite contented.

Then they told stories and smoked for a while. Loki tried to remember the stories to tell to Chi-weé—some of them were very funny and made the men laugh—but he could not understand most of them and could not remember them afterward at all. And then the men pulled the piles of brush as near to the fire as they could because they had no blankets and the night was very cool, and quickly they went to sleep. But Loki did not go to sleep—not for a long, long time. It was very strange to be in a camp with white men, and besides, an excitement that he could not explain kept him awake.

After what seemed a long while the fire grew very low and Loki put more sticks on it. Just then he heard a sound in the darkness beyond the firelight, and the two little cubs, who were tied to a tree stump, began to whimper and whine and pull at the thong that bound them.

Loki knew what that meant and watched the little things for a moment without moving. He tried to see in the dark, too, to make out the great shape that he knew was coming nearer and nearer to the ring

of light about the fire. The cubs grew more and more excited and tumbled over each other trying to pull loose from the thong, and they whimpered and cried like babies. The men were very tired and the noise did not awaken them, but Loki, after a little, pulled a knife from his belt and crept near to the cubs. He could hear that big something coming nearer and nearer through the darkness and he knew it was the mother bear coming for her cubs —even the fire could not keep her away from them, and if she could not get them loose she might fight for them. Loki knew this, and quick through his mind went the thought:

"If they come to her, she will not fight. These men are too sleepy, and she might hurt them before they could wake." So, very quickly, he drew his knife across the thongs binding the little bears and like two fat little balls of fur, they went rolling away into the darkness, and he could soon tell by the sounds that the mother bear had welcomed them and was sniffing all over them to be sure they were safe and were her very own cubs. Then the sounds went farther and farther away until he could hear only the little snapping that the fire made and that was such a sleepy sound that he soon found a pile of

brush for himself and in a very little while there was no one at all keeping watch around the camp fire!

When morning came the men were much surprised to find the cubs gone, but Loki only said:

"The big bear came and took them," and they had to be satisfied with that.

"Lucky she didn't take one of us," said Pete, and looked hard at Loki, but they broke up camp then and started down the canyon.

"And that is why," finished up Loki, "I came *this* night and not the *other* night. And that is why I am tired, and here is the dollar, *your* dollar—and one for me, too"—he held up another for her to see. "They gave me that for the help I gave to them."

"Oh, I wish," sighed Chi-weé, "I *wish* I could have seen those little, little cubs. When your hands touched them, did they feel soft—*very* soft, Loki?"

"Yes," said Loki. "Are you glad the mother bear has them now?"

"I am glad," smiled Chi-weé.

And that night, when Chi-weé was sound asleep, her mother saw her put her hand on a soft fur skin that was on her bed, and she smiled in her sleep.

CHAPTER IX

LOKI TELLS A STORY

The night sky is a hogan wide,
With roof of deepest blue;
Poked full of tiny, little holes
Where stars come peeking through!

CHI-WEÉ blinked her eyes and then opened them again very wide. It could not be! But there it was! She was in the Trader's store and she had come to spend the dollar Pete had sent to her—and there, right before her, more beautiful than anything she had ever imagined could be—was a red waist! Just about her size it looked to be, of some soft warm material with little yellow flowers all over it, and the card on it said—that was the wonderful part!—the part she could hardly believe—the card was marked, very plainly—ONE DOLLAR —TO-DAY ONLY!

She touched it timidly. Oh, what wonderful cloth! To wear that on feast days when everyone put on the very prettiest clothes they had! She was sure she

could dance in that—they would want her to dance! And the clown would grin at her—and how warm it would feel! And the little buttons were of black, shiny stuff!

"Never—*never* have I seen so *beautiful* a dress!" said a very little voice near Chi-weé and she turned suddenly to see standing by her a little girl very nearly her own size, but such a ragged, hungry looking little girl! She, too, was looking at the red waist but there was such a dull, hopeless look in her eyes that Chi-weé knew, without one word, that *she* had no dollar to buy with.

The little girl did not look at her, but after one more long look at the waist she walked slowly out of the store, her dirty little bare feet dragging on the floor.

Chi-weé looked again at the red waist.

"My mother will be happy when I wear that," she thought, but there was something heavy pulling at her heart, something that had not been there before she saw that poor, ragged little girl—and then she had different thoughts very suddenly.

"I have a very good waist at home to wear on feast days—and I do not have to wear only rags. I do not think it would be nice to wear rags—it might

The clown would grin at her.

be cold sometimes"; and then, without another thought, she ran to the door of the store. The little girl was standing there alone in the dusty place where the horses of those who came to trade were fastened.

"Why do you wear rags?" asked Chi-weé, and her voice was kind, so the little girl answered her.

"I have no mother and no father to give me clothes. My aunt has many children and she tells me there is not enough for all."

"Are you cold when the wind blows?" asked Chi-weé, and the other nodded.

"I am cold—many times," she said, and Chi-weé took hold of her arm and pulled her into the store.

"Come," she said, and the other followed her without question.

The Trader showed no surprise when Chi-weé bought from him the red waist. He bought things and sold them and did not ask questions, though he had kind words often for the little girl.

And when Chi-weé gave the waist to the ragged little girl, she was not surprised that there were no words of thanks—it was the look in the eyes that made her feel very happy and her heart was light again with a feeling that made her want to sing—

and she liked the way the girl took the bundle so carefully in her arms and walked away with it, and this time the little bare feet almost skipped with joy.

"I am glad," said Chi-weé to herself. "I am *very* glad that I have *not* that waist!" But she blinked hard when she walked past the place in the store where it had been, and she did not speak much to her mother on the long ride home. There was another woman with her mother this time in the wagon and they talked so much together that they did not notice the silence of Chi-weé!

When they came near to the mesa, there was Loki in the desert with his sheep, and Chi-weé begged her mother to let her stay there with him until the hour of sundown.

"But this time do not stay when it is dark," warned her mother.

"I will not stay," answered Chi-weé, and watched the wagon roll away, with old Mah-peé-ti driving.

The thought that was worrying her was how to tell Pete about the way she had spent that dollar. Maybe he would be angry that she had not bought a pretty thing for herself.

"What do *you* think, Loki?" she asked him when she had told him all about it.

There was Loki in the desert with his sheep.

"I think a little girl cannot live always in rags, but why did you not give the girl your old waist and keep the new one?"

"I did not think of that," said Chi-weé, "but she will be very glad to have that beautiful one—and maybe, someday, I can have one. But sometimes I think, Loki—sometimes I think it would be good if we could wear skin coats like the animal brothers do, and not have to wear buy clothes at all!"

"Do you know the tale about that?" asked Loki, eagerly. "About when the animals did not want to give up their skins to men for coats? That is a good tale."

"Oh, tell me!" cried Chi-weé, "I like much to hear stories." And she settled herself comfortably in a place under a mesquite tree. How peaceful it was here in the desert with Loki and the sheep, and the blue hills all around—and the little dog of Loki running about keeping watch! And now she would hear a story—almost the best thing in the world, she thought, was to hear a story!

"Old Mo-ie told it to me," began Loki, "and he knows many things. I think it must be a true story. I will tell it to you just as he told it to me. Listen!

"A long, long time ago, in the beginning of things,

all the animals and men lived together in a great camp on the edge of the desert. For many seasons they were happy and contented together—they had their fields of maize and cotton and tobacco; their sacred lodges and their dances—but one thing they did not *all* have.

"Summer and winter the animals were satisfied with the coats they wore—the ones they had been given in the beginning by the Great Spirit—but the men were not so satisfied. In the summer it was well enough to wear a garment of cot on woven on the looms of the men, but in the winter they must have skins and furs to keep them warm—hides of their brother animals.

"For a while the animals were willing that this should be so, men would die with the cold, so they said, if they did not have warm covering, and so their animal brothers gave their lives that men might live. But this was not enough for the men. Not only did they want covering, but they wanted things to make them more beautiful, and so they killed animals when they did not need to and when they had tasted the meat and found it good for food, they killed many more and could not be satisfied. Deer

were killed and rabbits and bear and buffalo and many harmless little animals whose fur was beautiful to the eyes and soft to the touch. More and more were the animals killed until they were filled with a great fear that all would be destroyed, and then was a council called—a council for animals alone—men were not called to come.

"Now, among the tribe of men was a maiden, young and fair of face, but, more than this, her heart was good and she had kind thoughts only, for all men and animals. In her very early childhood she had been given the gift of great magic—the magic that was taught by the wise men in the old time. At will she could take the form of animal, bird, or fish—and many times she had done this, always to help her brothers or sisters who were in trouble.

"Now when Too-lah (that was the maiden's name) heard of the great council of animals that had been called, she knew well that wrong things were about to happen, for always before, men and animals had held their councils together—so, the night the animals met she was there among them in the form of Chu-chu-etee, the field mouse.

"Late at night it was when the council met—

high on a great rock, that in all directions they might see if men came near. In numbers they were far more than the tribe of man, and in strength they were far greater—but they feared the magic of men and the weapons they used. But Too-lah saw that they were very fierce this night and that they had mischief in their hearts and she feared for men.

"Silently the animals gathered and silently they waited for their chief one to speak. The bear was their chief, and wise he was, and old and of great size.

"'Brothers,' he said, and his voice was like thunder on the still night air—'Brothers, it is known to you why we meet here!'

"There was a great rumble of voices in reply.

"'Yes,' they said, 'we know why we have come here!'

"'It is well,' said the chief. 'We are within the law—does not the law say, "A life for a life"?'

"'That is the law,' came the rumble again.

"'Men have taken now of our number more than the number of their tribe—if they live they will take more. We are not safe—our children are not safe. We have been patient, very patient.

Shall men live until we and our children are all dead?'

"'They shall not live.' came the answer, and Toolah shivered at its fierceness.

"'It is well—men shall die—you have said. When shall this be?'

"The rumble now was not clear—plainly they said many things and were not of one mind.

"'Enough!' said the leader again. 'And listen to my words. Men have magic—they have skill with weapons that we know not of—though we are greater than they in number, you know well that we cannot meet them in open battle. Then hear! Must we kill them while they sleep?' There was silence at this—a startled silence of fear. For some moments there was no sound and then:

"'It is not the law,' said several voices. 'It is bad to fight against the law.'

"'I know well that it is not the law,' spoke the chief. 'but it is that or die! We cannot fight within the law!' Again there was silence.

"'It is that or die,' again said the chief. 'Come, what say you, brothers?'

"'If we must—we must!' came the voices.

"'It is well,' said the bear chief then. 'In the

dark of the moon we will meet here again and go to the camp of men. After that we shall have no more fear.—It is said!'

"'WAR!' came the murmur of voices now—'War on men—war to the death!'

"Too-lah did not wait to hear more. With fast-beating heart she returned to the camp of men, and though it was late and the women and children slept, there was a trail of pale gray smoke from the smoke hole of the council lodge and she knew that the wise men of the tribe awaited her there.

"There was grave shaking of heads when she had finished her account of the animal council.

"'This will take much thought,' said the wisest of them all. 'And wisdom greater than our wisdom, brothers.'

"Then up spoke Too-lah eagerly:

"'This is where my magic is again of use, Father,' she cried. 'I will go to the moss house in the center of the earth and gain wisdom from the chief ones there—is it well?'

"'It is well, Daughter,' he said. 'Go, and go quickly—our time is short.'

"And Too-lah, in the form of a snake, slipped down into the earth. Down, down she went—past the

roots of growing things, and the homes of the small creatures who live in the earth. They cried after her to know why she came but her answer was always:

"'Come to the council in the moss house in the center of the earth.' And by magic known to them they went faster than did she and were in the council lodge when she arrived there. There were many there, and chief among them was the ancient father of all the Rattlesnakes.

"'Brothers,' said Too-lah, when they were all in their places and had smoked the pipe of ceremony, 'I bring you greetings from your brothers, men.'

"'Greetings!' answered the earth people with one voice.

"'I come,' again said Too-lah, 'to gain your help —from your words of wisdom. Our brothers, the animals, have sworn that they will kill all men— kill them secretly, while they sleep!'

"'That is not the law!' spoke those of the council. 'The law says—if you must fight, fight fairly and in the open!'

"'It is so,' said Too-lah. 'But from their own mouths have I heard it that they are coming to kill all men—at night they will come—and secretly.'

"'Men are our friends,' said the earth people. 'This must not be.'

"'What shall we do?' asked Too-lah. 'They are stronger than we, and more in number than we can fight.'

"'If you fight with weapons of the hands,' said the ancient Snake Chief, 'our animal brothers will win. But it will be better if we fight with our thoughts and have no war. My desire is that there be no war.'

"'My ears are open,' said Too-lah. 'All this way have I come, O Chief, to hear the words of wisdom you will speak.'

"'Then, listen!' said the Chief. 'In three days my people shall bite off the roots of all growing things and they shall die. I will give you seeds to plant again, but do not plant until our brothers, the animals, have given pledge that they will have no war. When they find they have no food they will come to men and give readily their pledge.'

"'It is well,' said Too-lah, and spoke words of gratitude to the Snake Chief as he gave into her hand the bag of seeds he had promised.

"Swiftly, then, she left the Moss House and returned to the lodge of her people. Still the wise men

waited, and eagerly they listened to the words of the ancient Snake Priest, but gravely then the wisest of all the wise men shook his head.

"'It is not enough,' he said. 'It is well known to you, my brothers, and to you, best of maidens, that the animals are a very wise people and have vast stores of food in secret places—they will not starve if all growing things die—and they will still desire war. No, it is not enough.'

"Then spoke Too-lah, eagerly again:

"'The wisdom of those below was not enough, my father—I will go to the house in the Sky. They who are above see all things and they will give us the wisdom that we seek. May I go, my father?'

"'It is well, my daughter,' said the old man. 'Go, and go quickly.'

"And Too-lah, in the form of an eagle, soared up into the night air—high, high above the trees and the mountains and past the clouds.

"She passed many birds on the way, who called to her—and the spirit of the Rain, and the bird of Thunder and the Dawn called to her to know why she was there, but always she answered that she would speak at the council when they met in the Sky House, and by magic that was greater than hers,

they were at the Sky House before her and awaited her coming.

"The Father of all the Rains was chief in the Sky House and to him spoke Too-lah when the council was seated and they had smoked the ceremonial pipe.

"'Brothers,' she said, 'I bring you greetings from your brothers, men.'

"'Greetings!' answered the Sky People, with one voice.

"'I come,' said Too-lah, 'to gain your help—from your words of wisdom. Our brothers, the animals, have sworn that they will kill all men—kill them secretly and while they sleep.'

"'That is not the law,' spoke those of the council. 'The law says, if you must fight—fight fairly and in the open.'

"'It is so,' said Too-lah, 'but from their own mouths I have heard it that they are coming to kill all men—at night they will come, and secretly.'

"'Men are our friends,' said the Sky People. 'This must not be.'

"'What shall we do?' asked Too-lah. 'It is for your words of wisdom I have come. What say you, Great Chief?' and she spoke to the Father of all the Rains.

"'It is not my wish that we have war,' said he, slowly. 'This is a great matter—listen—it is thus I speak—' and he took the pipe from his mouth and sent a puff of smoke to the north, to the south, to the east, and to the west, and up and down. 'It is thus that your wise men shall do, Daughter. Listen! In three days I shall send the sun with a great heat to dry up all the water on the earth. Say to your people to have jars and pools hid away in the rocks that they may not die of the thirst—and then, when the animals come to you with tongues dry and parched from lack of water, they are to give you pledge that there shall be no war, and *your* people are to give *me* pledge that there shall be no more needless killing of our animal brothers. Then your wise men shall make prayers for rain, a secret prayer that I shall give you, and they will blow smoke as I have done, to the four ways and up and down, and rain shall come down. But if their pledge is broken, rain shall not come down! And as a token that I speak truth—that your people may know—take this small piece of the blue sky down to your people, and when they see it they will believe.' And into the ear of Too-lah he told the secret prayer for rain —the prayer that only our people have known from

that day until now, and it is a true prayer and always brings the rain—and into her hand he gave a piece of the blue sky. And Too-lah, with many words of gratitude, left the Sky House and came down to the lodge of wise men again.

"'It is well,' said now the wise men in the council lodge. 'It is well—and you have done well, my daughter.' But when they reached for the piece of sky it fell from the hand of Too-lah and broke into small pieces and sank into the earth, and since then men have found it, in many places, and they call it Turquoise, some say the meaning of that is, 'Stone of the Maiden.'

"It was as the Father of all the Rains had said it would be, and when the earth grew dry the animals came to the men and begged for water, and when they had given pledge that there should be no war, the wise men prayed for rain and it came—and men kept their pledge to the Sky Chief.

"And every year, that the animals may not forget their pledge to men, all growing things die and there is a dry season and there are many prayers for rain."

"Is *that* the reason?" cried Chi-weé. "The tale must be true, Loki. But did old Mo-ie say more of Too-lah? Tell me!"

"Yes," said Loki, "He said this of Too-lah. Have you seen, Chi-weé, after a storm, the bow of many colors in the sky?"

"Oh, yes," answered Chi-weé. "Many times have I seen it."

"Well, old Mo-ie said this—Too-lah now lives in the Sky House with the people of the Rain, and when it has rained hard, she opens the door a little way to see that all is well with those of the earth and the bow of many colors is the light as it shines from the door of the Sky House. Some call it 'The Smile of Too-lah'!"

"That is a very nice tale," cried Chi-weé, delighted. "I will remember that story—and now look, how it grows late. To-morrow I go very early to a far place, and when I come back I will tell you many things about that place."

And she jumped to her feet and with a wave of her hand to Loki ran, like the wind, back to her mesa home, and Loki smiled to himself for a long time after she had gone

CHAPTER X

THE COPPER RING

Old brother Big-eyes is calling—"Wh-oo-oo!"
The Night-hawk circles, he's calling too—
The Father Moon beams from the big sky blue.
They're calling to Sleepy-eyes—
Oh, little Sleepy-eyes,
Yes, little Sleepy-eyes—*You!*—You!

SOMETHING had awakened her! Chi-weé was sure of that—but she could not tell just what it had been. She opened her eyes wide and blinked once, but it was still black dark and absolutely quiet everywhere, so she gave a little sigh, turned over and tried to go to sleep again.

"OO—ee—Chi-weé!—oo—ee-e!" There it was again and she jumped from her little bed of skins, wide awake now—and she remembered too! How strange that she could have forgotten even in sleep.

It was the sister of her mother who was calling—the one who was to ride to Canyon Largito this day—and she, Chi-weé, was to go with her to be gone four whole days! They had to make a very early

start, long before the dawn, so that they might reach the shadows of the canyon before the heat of the desert became too great. And Chi-weé gathered together in great haste the few things she was to take with her—some piki bread and dried peaches, a jar of goat's milk, and her shawl.

Her mother was still sleeping and Chi-weé did not awaken her, but, pressing her cheek for a second to one of the hands that lay outside the cover, she slipped out of the door and closed it softly behind her.

Then, like the wind, she ran to the top of the wide trail where her aunt and the others awaited her in the wagon, impatient to start.

They all looked queer and ghostly in the faint starlight and Chi-weé felt almost as if she were dreaming as she climbed into the wagon and drew a blanket about her.

There were a man and a woman besides her aunt. The man and the woman were to bring her back in four days while her aunt was to stay in the canyon with her husband who had started a small peach orchard there.

How strange it seemed to be riding in the night. The sounds and smells were different and the familiar

trail and desert were like a new world—big and black and wonderful!

Chi-weé was not sleepy, but there were no words spoken as they rode and she was glad of that. She loved the silence that was really full of sound; the "thud" of the horses' hoofs and the clank of the harness; the rattle of the wagon, and the soft sounds that came from the desert. And, presently, the whole world began to awaken—first, the little breeze that swept over the sage like a drink of cool water and smelled like fresh honey and dew; then the sleepy chirp of birds and twittering of prairie dogs and tiny earth animals; then the pale, pale glow in the east that grew and grew and turned from softest rose to crimson and orange and gold as the sun popped over the horizon.

And day was more fun than night, for Chi-weé could watch the purple hills come closer and closer and turn into red buttes and queer shapes that towered above them as they drove into the canyon —but that took all day long, and they stopped several times to eat and to water the horses in a big wash, and Chi-weé saw many things besides hills and rocks.

Quite late that night they were still riding up

the canyon, but now there was a moon and it seemed almost as bright as day, except right up under the cliffs where it was very black and queer-looking.

When they reached the end of their journey, a little camp with just two or three small cabins or huts on the edge of a new peach orchard, Chi-weé was very glad to get out of the wagon and stretch her legs. Her aunt and the others were immediately busy unloading the wagon and talking to the men who had been away from the mesa for some time and who lived in the little camp.

Chi-weé walked over toward the side of the canyon where she had noticed some very strange-looking houses up in the cliff. They were quite a distance away, but she walked fast and soon came to a part of the cliff just below where they were, but there was no way to get up.

She sat down on what seemed to be a crumbling wall and looked up wonderingly at the houses. These were not like the house where she and Loki had trapped the bear: that had been very small and plain, while these were much larger and beautiful and white, strung out in a long line on the cliff, and they had a new look, as if they had been built only yesterday, but her aunt had told her that even

the people who had made them had been dead many, many cycles of time and no one knew anything about them. It was very strange and she could not keep her eyes from them.

Just then a voice spoke very softly behind her.

"It is late, little one, for thee to be up—in the moonlight—and the steps are not so easy for sleepy-eyes to see, in the shadow of the cliff. Come!"

Chi-weé rose immediately and followed the voice. This must be one of the women from the camp, she thought drowsily, and she would be very glad to get to sleep after such a long day. But the woman did not lead her toward the camp—straight for the cliff wall she went, and as she reached it she began to climb. Chi-weé followed close and put her hands and feet in the little climbing places in the rock that she had not seen before. She climbed as easily as if it was something she did every day of her life.

When they had reached the shelf where the strange-looking houses were the woman walked toward them and entered one, with Chi-weé still following. There were many other people around them now who laughed and talked together very pleasantly, paying small heed to the little girl. She noticed that they were dressed very differently

from any one she had seen before, but this did not seem strange to her, nor did the house seem strange where she soon found herself cuddling down into a couch in the side of the wall and pulling the soft blankets up to her chin as she slipped into a sound and dreamless sleep.

Early the next morning Chi-weé opened her eyes and looked about the tiny room. Everything in this strange place was tiny, she thought, from the houses to the people themselves and even the animals that she noticed in the streets or places between the houses. They were almost like play people only they were very much alive and very real.

The sunlight shone into her room through a small, square opening in the side of the wall and lighted up everything clearly. There was the place for grinding corn, just as at home; the little fireplace with its eagle or turkey wing for keeping it clean and clear of ashes; the big boiling basket in which the hot stones were thrown to cook mush and stews, and the other jars and baskets for cooking and eating. On several pegs in the wall were hanging bright-colored cotton garments, some with borders of beautiful feather-work and some with shells, and across the room Chi-weé saw another couch like her own, only

larger—a sort of shelf in the wall, and on it folded blankets and soft skins for covers and on the floor were several mats woven of reeds and grasses. It was a very homey room, and a pleasant-looking woman in a pretty colored cotton dress was standing in the doorway looking at her with a smile on her face.

"Thou hast slept well, little one," said the woman. "Are the little arms fresh and eager for the pottery-making this day?"

Chi-weé smiled back at her and sprang from her couch.

"May I make a jar this day?" she asked, eagerly. "A jar with pretty marks on it, such as you make, smiling one?"

"Yes," nodded the woman, "this day thou shalt do it—and give me thy hand—look what I have for thee." As she spoke she slipped a little copper ring on Chi-weé's finger. "Thy father made it yesterday. Is it not a beautiful ring, little one? —All hammered out so smooth and bright. You will wear it, always—to remember how thy father loves thee—and *I* love thee, too, precious one. Do not forget that!"

And with their arms around each other they went out of the little house into the sunshine.

How busy was everyone in the whole place. One woman, singing in a high sweet voice, was grinding corn on a housetop; others were stringing peppers and drying meat and melons and maize and tanning hides. Chi-weé could see several weaving bright cotton cloth.

The men were down in the fields below and away on the hunt, and everywhere were little children, from tiny babies on mothers' backs to children as old as Chi-weé herself. The small ones wore no clothes at all, but the larger ones had pretty colored cotton kilts such as she saw, with surprise, that she herself was wearing.

Presently they came to a little square, flat place with a fire at one end and a pile of damp clay and a small flat rock at the other.

"Here we are," said the pleasant woman, "and here thou shalt make the beautiful jar. But, first, what of that little empty place that cries for food? —Thy father went early to the fields to-day, but thou wert so weary that I let thee sleep. Here is thy breakfast." And, wrapped in a maize husk, she laid before Chi-weé a delicious cake of maize on which was a piece of stewed rabbit, and beside it she placed some dried fruit

Chi-weé lost no time in eating, for she found she was very hungry. The woman watched her, smilingly, for a moment, and then busied herself with the damp clay.

"Look, little one," she called, "this is the way thou shalt begin thy very first jar. See, I will give thee an easy way"; and she took a bowl-shaped basket and began to pile up in the bottom of it little coils of clay that she rolled between the palms of her hands, piling them round and round in the basket from the tiny circle at the bottom to a large circle at the top, smoothing it always from the inside so that the little rolls of clay fitted perfectly one on top of the other until she had a bowl of clay inside the basket.

Chi-weé hurriedly finished her breakfast and began to do exactly as the woman did, in a basket of her own—following every movement and building up the clay until her jar looked just like the other. Then the woman began to make smaller circles of clay laying them on the others as before and keeping one hand always holding up and smoothing from the inside. Now the bowl was becoming a real jar—and Chi-weé's eyes became bright with excitement as she saw that hers was just as beautiful and well

done as the other one. When they were both finished and smoothed on the inside with a little water, the woman took a small round stick and made markings to look like basketwork, and then she lifted them both carefully and laid them on the ground, free from the baskets in which they had been made.

"Now, these," she said, "shall go to the fire to be baked—and oh, how beautiful is the jar that *thou* hast made!—To think that it is thy very first! Look! We will make a mark to show it is thine"; and she smoothed a little place on the side of the jar and with a sharp stick made a small, flying bird. She looked at Chi-weé, smiling. "*Thy* mark!" she said. "And when that is seen all shall know that *thou* hast made the jar. And *some* day," she added, proudly, "some day, great ones will come from far to seek that mark—for thy jars will be more beautiful than other jars!"

Chi-weé felt very proud and happy and looked up into the smiling face so close to her own.

Suddenly she felt very sleepy and her eyes grew so heavy she could not hold them open. Down, down went her head, and she curled up in a little heap like a dog in front of a fire and drifted off to the place of dreams.

A long while after, she felt that someone was lifting her and she moved her head to be more comfortable on the shoulder she knew was there.

"Have I done well, smiling one?" she asked, drowsily.

"It is not strange that you have slept," spoke a voice, the *voice of her aunt.* "But the bed place is ready now, little one, and it must be that a little empty girl is ready for her supper."

Chi-weé opened her eyes wide and slipped down from the arms that held her. She looked about in an astonishment that quickly awakened her. They were standing by the crumbling wall just under the great cliff and the bright rays of moonlight were flooding with their silver radiance the walls of the strange-looking houses high above them. There was no way up, every bit of that flat sheer wall of rock she could see, no climbing holes for hands or feet, and the only living things up there were bats, great clouds of them, screeching and clattering in the moonlight.

"Come, Chi-weé," said her aunt again. "It is growing cold now and very late for a little girl to be awake."

Chi-weé shook her head in a puzzled way, and then

held up her hand suddenly, remembering what should be there. On one finger was a little copper ring, not bright and smooth but dull and green.

She looked at it for a moment and then she looked up at the white houses high in the cliff, and a queer little smile came to her lips.

"I shall remember," she said, in a low voice, as if speaking to herself. "Yes, I shall remember, 'smiling one,'" but to her aunt she said, very quietly, "I will come now."

Her aunt looked at her strangely.

"I think you are yet asleep, Chi-weé," she said. "Have you found that little ring in the rocks?"

"No, I did not find it," said Chi-weé, slowly. "My father made it for me—a long time ago. I shall keep it always!" and they walked back to the little camp together.

CHAPTER XI

THE WONDERFUL JAR

Out of the earth of the desert I came;
Gray was my color and clay was my name;
But little hands moulded and formed me with care,
And now I have beauty and color most rare!

CHI-WEÉ was very quiet for the rest of her stay in the canyon, and she would stand for hours looking up at the strange-looking houses in the cliff wall thinking and wondering. But she was not quiet when she got back to her mesa home. It seemed as if she would almost burst with all she had to say to her mother and she began the very moment they were alone together.

"Oh, my mother—the wonderful things that have happened to me. Look at this!" and she held up the little copper ring to the wondering eyes of her mother.

"A little ring," said her mother, "a little, very old ring—where have you found it?" and then all the strange story came tumbling out—of the night in the old, old town in the cliff and the morning that fol-

lowed—and Chi-weé's mother listened with eyes that grew big enough to satisfy any little girl, but the words that she said brought a quick look of hurt to Chi-weé's face.

"What a wonderful dream—little one—what a truly wonderful dream!"

"It was no dream!" cried Chi-weé, quickly. "I had no dream, my mother. Have you forgotten *this?*" and she held the little copper ring again before her mother's eyes.

"You must have found that and forgotten it," smiled her mother. "How could it have been more than a dream?"

"It was *no* dream," repeated Chi-weé, "and I did not find the ring. But wait!—I can *show* you that it was no dream! Come!" And she led the way out of the house to the place where her mother made her jars.

"You know, my mother, always you have told me that I was not yet big enough to make jars—but, look!—I will make one and *not* like the jars you make. It was *this* way the 'smiling one' taught me!" and very carefully Chi-weé, after selecting a bowl-shaped basket from the several her mother used, began to roll the little coils of clay, piling them round and

round and carefully smoothing them on the inside as she had done that other time.

It was hard to tell what the mother was thinking as she watched the little girl at work, but there was wonder in her eyes, and once or twice she shook her head in a puzzled way. When she had finished making the jar Chi-weé, after a moment's thought, smoothed a little place on its surface as she had seen the woman do, and with a sharp little stick made the mark of the flying bird.

"THERE!" she said. "Now will you bake it, my mother—and we will take it to the Trader at the canyon store."

Her mother smiled at this.

"You must not think that there are those who would buy your very *first* jar, little daughter—you will make better ones than this, in time—but *this* jar—though it is handsome," she added, hastily, as she saw the look in Chi-weé's face, "it is not very likely that they will buy this jar."

"But please, my mother—let me take it," begged Chi-weé. "She said—the 'smiling one' said—that great ones would come from far to buy the jars that I make."

Her mother shook her head but she smiled again.

"You will find that they will not come for *this* jar—but it does not matter—take it if you wish. It can make no harm to take it."

It seemed to Chi-weé that she could hardly wait for the next trading day—but it was a whole week away. The jar was baked and came out such a beautiful brown and was carefully put away in a basket.

Never, thought the little girl, had she seen a more wonderful jar. Each day she looked at it and thought of the queer houses in the cliff, and presently she began to wonder if the words of her mother were really so and whether it was truly only a dream that she had seen—but then she would look at the little copper ring and shake her head—that was real and she had not found it.

At last came the day when they were to go to the trading store. Chi-weé helped her mother put the jars she had made in the wagon in little nests in the blanket, and then came *her* jar—the precious one—in its wrappings. She felt that she could not trust this to the wagon, but carried it all the way in her arms.

She grew very tired at times, especially when the old wagon was extra bumpety, but even then she did

not put the jar down, and it was with a great sigh of relief that she got down at the trading store. And old Mah-peé-ti, the sheep-herder, smiled at her when he heard the sigh of relief and said:

"That is a great baby you have there in your arms," for he knew that it was her first jar that she carried.

Chi-weé was almost too excited even to hear him, and carried the jar into the store. But as soon as she was inside she grew suddenly shy and waited until her mother had done her trading before she drew near the Trader. What if he should not want her jar? She trembled a little as she took it out of its wrappings.

The Trader took it carefully in his hands and looked at it gravely.

"Your mother did not teach you to make this jar, little one. Where did you learn?" he asked, kindly. But Chi-weé was suddenly without words, she could not tell him and only hung her head in a way that was not usual to her.

The Trader tapped his finger on the jar for a moment in thought.

"The people who buy my jars have never asked

for this kind," he said, slowly, and Chi-weé's heart dropped like a stone—she felt *sure* he was not going to take it now. "But," he continued, "you could leave it here, if you like, and we shall see. Look! There is an old man now—you see him over in the corner of the store?—He is always looking for baskets and jars that are different from those that other peop'e buy. Let us show it to him now—come!" and Chi weé slowly fol'owed the Trader as he walked across the store and touched the old man on the arm.

"Eh?" said the man, as he turned around, and he carefully fixed his spectacles on his nose as he listened to what the Trader said, and then took the jar into his own hands.

"Um-m-m!" he said then, turning it from side to side and tapping its brown surface with one finger, and then:

"Eh!" again, in rather a different voice, as he saw the little bird mark on the jar. "This is strange," he said, "very strange. Who made this jar?"

Chi-weé hardly dared look up as the Trader told the old man that she had made the jar.

He looked at her queerly for a moment and then back at the jar.

"*You* made it?" he asked, then—"Um-m-m—have you ever been away from here—as far away as Sante Fe?"

Chi-weé shook her head. "No," she said.

He tapped the jar again for a moment as the Trader had done and seemed to be thinking.

"I will take it," he said, suddenly. "How much is it?"

This was something Chi-weé had not thought of. She stammered:

"You pay—what you think—what you want——"

The man felt in his pocket and then felt in another pocket but could not find what he seemed to be looking for.

"I will send you the money," he said then. "This man here"—nodding at the Trader—"will tell you that I pay—that I always pay. Is that all right?"

"Oh, yes," said Chi-weé. "That is all right"; and she walked out of the store with two little pink spots in her cheeks and her heart beating in time to the happy words that were in her mind.

"The 'smiling one' was right—the 'smiling one' was right! Oh, how happy I am!"

Several days passed and Chi-weé could think only of her jar and wonder what money the old man

would send for it. She had made another one, but it did not seem quite so beautiful as the first and somehow her mother did not seem to think it was beautiful at all.

"Why do you not learn to make the smooth jars of pretty shape such as I make, little daughter?" she asked. "The jars you make—I do not say it to hurt you—look like the jars that little children make when they play. You have sold one—yes—but I think you will not sell more like that. Come, let me teach you." And Chi-weé was beginning to learn how to make them, but slowly, for she still remembered the words of the "smiling one."

One day the Trader rode up the trail to the mesa top and Chi-weé, with fast-beating heart, saw him come. He came on a matter of business with one of the men, but when he saw the little girl standing in her doorway he rode up to her on his horse and felt in his pocket as he came.

"I have something for you, little one," he said. "Look at this!" and he put a five-dollar bill in her hand. "And let me tell you what the old man said in his letter. He said there was something about that jar you made—something that he had seen somewhere else—a *mark*, he said it was. And he

wanted to be sure about it. So he took the jar to a museum in Sante Fe (a museum is a house where they keep very old things they have found in queer places)—and he was right. There was a piece of an old, old jar there—the only one like it ever found—and it had a mark on it just like the mark on *your* jar. The old one came from a cliff-dwelling somewhere. And he said it was because it was so strange that he thought your jar was worth five dollars, and so he sent it. But, if you want to sell any *more* jars, little one, get your mother to teach you how to make them—for I know of no more old men who want queer jars"; and, with a smile, the Trader rode away.

Chi-weé looked at the money in her hand almost in a daze, and then she thought of the words the old man had said.

"The *old* jar, like mine, was found in a cliff place," she said, and nodded to herself. "Yes, I shall not forget, 'smiling one'—but to others I cannot tell it, for they will not believe." Then her thoughts changed suddenly.

"Oh, my mother!" she cried, turning into the little house, "I shall make jars like *yours—they* are the most beautiful jars in all the world—and *then* I shall sell them all!"

CHAPTER XII

THE NEST

When the night fades into morning,
And the starlets disappear,
I am glad the day is dawning,
And I'm glad the light is here!
But when purple shades are falling,
And the sun sinks in the west,
And I hear the night birds calling,
That's the time I like the best!

LOKI had come clear to the top of the mesa to tell Chi-weé about the queer nest he had found.

"It is not like any other nest I have seen," he said. "All woven with feathers and little sticks and in it are five eggs with colors on them pink and blue—I think little birds will come out of them soon, maybe this day they will come out. Will your mother say you can come and see?"

The eyes of Chi-weé danced with the news and the mother nodded before she was asked.

"If this boy will see that no danger comes to you, little one, you may go."

"She shall be very safe," said Loki, and he made his shoulders to be square and strong like a man's shoulders. "Loki will have great care that she shall be safe." And Chi-weé looked up at him and felt that he was older than he had been before.

They were very happy on the way down the trail, and Chi-weé told Loki about the jar she had made and the queer old man who had bought it, and then Loki told her of the trip he would make on the next day to be gone for many days to the big fiesta at Ganadó, where there would be races and a chicken-pull and many other exciting things.

"Oh," cried Chi-weé, "it is so fine to be a man and go to such far places"; and Loki squared his shoulders again and felt that he was very big and old.

They were always glad to be in the desert in the early morning. It seemed as if all the world had just been made fresh and clean and there was such a nice smell to everything. But somehow Chi-weé could not go very fast, there was so much to see. To some people the desert would not seem full of things to see, but to Chi-weé and Loki every step brought something new and exciting. There were trails through the sage, of little animals they knew, and queer little flowers in the rocks and close to the

ground and on the twisted strange trees that grew where it seemed as if nothing *could* grow, and bright pebbles of many colors, and more than once they had found tiny arrowheads of stone from the long, long ago.

Loki led the way toward some low hills that were covered with a scrubby growth of mesquite and jack oaks.

"I hope the nest is not very near," cried Chi-weé. "I could walk very far this day."

"We can walk when we have found it," laughed Loki. "But, listen!" he stopped short. "Did you hear a very strange sound?"

Chi-weé came near to him. "What is it?" she asked, in a low voice. "I hear it—what is it, Loki?"

From somewhere near them, it seemed to be from the very ground itself, a sound came. A strange sound that was like the low cry of an animal, and yet not like that. It came again and again, but not so loud as at first.

"We must go back," said Chi-weé. "Quickly, we must go back, Loki."

"Hush!" He did not move as the sound came again. "It is not nearer—listen! It does not sound like any animal I have ever heard."

"Do you think maybe there *are* witches?" asked Chi-weé, and a little shiver went all over her. "Could it be a witch, Loki? We must go now."

"I must see," said Loki. "Wait in this place and I will come back."

"Do not go away," cried Chi-weé. "If you go, *I* will go."

"I must see." And there was no fear in the voice of Loki, so the shiver left Chi-weé and she kept close to him as they crept forward. They were on ground that was fairly level but in front of them, very near, were many low bushes and they could not see beyond them. It was from beyond these low bushes that the sound had seemed to come. As they crept forward there was no noise now, and the little rustling they made as they moved through the bushes seemed very loud.

In a very little while they came to the edge of the bushes and saw that the earth went straight down beyond them in a wash or arroyo that was very deep. There were great rocks and a few bushes sticking out of the sides of the arroyo, but the bottom of it was so far down that Loki drew back quickly when he had looked over the edge and he threw out an arm and held Chi-weé tightly for fear she might fall.

"Oh, the poor, poor one," cried Chi-weé. "We must help him—quickly."

"What is it?" asked Chi-weé. "Did you see what made the noise?"

"No," answered Loki, "but it must be down there."

Very carefully then he leaned over and looked and this time he saw what he had not seen before. Just beneath where they were, near a large boulder, crumpled up like an old sack of straw, was a man or a woman, alive or dead, he could not tell.

Chi-weé, too, was leaning over the edge of the arroyo and saw at the same moment.

"Oh, the poor, poor one," she cried. "We must help him—quickly."

Loki looked again, very carefully.

"Yes," he said. "It is a man, a very old man—but he is far down and the place is steep. And he may be dead."

"Oh, *no!*" said Chi-weé. "Something says he is *not* dead—and the noise—do not forget that noise he made. We must get down there."

"I could get to him," said Loki, "but we could not get him up. We are not that big."

"I have a belt," said Chi-weé. "It is long and very strong—my mother made it—could we pull him up with that?"

Loki looked at the belt but he did not smile.

"I will go down there," he said, "and then we will see what we can do."

"I am going down that place, also, if you go," said Chi-weé, and stood up and looked at Loki with a look that he had learned to know. So he said no more but began to look for a place where they could climb down into the arroyo.

"Here is a place," he said, in a few moments. "Follow me very closely and hold to the roots and tight stones." And so, climbing very carefully and slowly, and slipping once in a while, they at last got down to the floor of the wash and walked quickly over to the place where they had seen the man.

He was old, with very white hair, and it looked as if he had fallen from the top of the wash, but there was no blood and he was breathing quietly as if he felt no pain.

The two children put him carefully in what they felt would be a more comfortable position, and Chi-weé made little sounds of pity in her throat.

"Look, Loki," she said. "How he is an old grandfather—we must help him—once *I* had a grandfather and he was very kind."

"Yes," said Loki. "I have a grandfather now—like this one."

"You see, he is not dead," said Chi-weé, "but he has had a big fall—from the top of that cliff he must have come, where we came down.—I think water, maybe, would make him to open his eyes."

"I did not bring the water gourd," said Loki, "but it may be we can find some if we dig. The time of rain is not far gone."

"We will try," said Chi-weé, "and we must get one to take this grandfather to where he belongs. He looks to be of your people, Loki. Do you know by what name he is called?"

"He has the clothes and looks of Navajo," said Loki, "but he has much dirt and sand on his face. But, look at this! It must be old Cho-tlanny, the medicine man—see this thing he wears?" and Loki held up a medal that was strung on a necklace of silver beads about the old man's neck—"Cho-tlanny lives a great way from here, but it must be that this is he."

"Oh, go quickly, and get one to come," cried Chi-weé. "He may have broken places—we must save this old man, Loki. I will get water if it runs in this

wash, but you go!" and she gave a push to Loki to hurry him away.

When she was alone with the old man she took a corner of her skirt and very carefully wiped the dirt from his face, talking to him in a low voice as she moved about.

"Chi-weé will help old man," she said. "Only a little, little while and all will be right—but it is water we need now—more than all, we need water." And then she walked quickly down the middle of the wash looking for a place that seemed a little less dry than the other places. She dug deep little holes with a stick in two places before she found any water and she would not have found it then if it had not been so near to the time of rains.

There was just one thing she could think of to carry the water in, so she pulled her little buckskin shoe from her foot (it was a Navajo shoe that she wore, and not the white boots she saved for only very special occasions) and dipped it down into the sandy hole she had made. She splashed the water in the old man's face and he gave a low moan and opened his eyes. He did not look at her right away but began to mumble and talk in Navajo. She could not speak much Navajo, but could understand

most of it, as Loki, who could speak her language and white-man talk as well as his own, had taught her many words.

Loki had climbed with difficulty out of the wash and had walked a great distance before he saw any one at all. Then he saw a number of people coming toward him and they were talking excitedly together in Navajo. A woman was speaking more loudly than the others and her words were very plain even before Loki came very near.

"He could not have gone far. He was sick and his mind was not right. Two days have I fed him only the broth of goat's meat and this day early I went to the hogan of Wum-pah-ha-mo that he might come and make to go out of him the evil that makes him to be sick. And when I came back my father was not there. I have looked for him in all the near places and now we must look in others. I have a great ache place in my heart for him and much fear."

Loki hurried toward the woman and called to her.

"Is it Cho-tlanny who is your father?"

"Oh, yes," cried the woman. "Have you found where he is?"

"Come with me," said Loki. "And bring a big blanket."

"Is he well?" asked the woman, with fear in her voice. "Where is it you have found him?"

And Loki told her about the old man in the wash and how he and Chi-weé had found him, and with many exclamations the men and the woman followed quickly where he led them.

"It is the mind sickness," said the daughter, as they walked. "For a long time he does not know the thing he does, and he does not know me or the words that I say."

After that they walked in silence until they came to the great wash. It was not easy to get down the side of this, for it was very steep and they spent much time walking back and forth to find a place where they could climb, but it was Loki that found it for them, and when they had all climbed down they walked very fast to the place where Chi-weé was waiting for them.

She had made the old man as comfortable as she could and he was sitting up now with his back leaning against a large boulder. She had given him water to drink and piki bread to eat. He smiled as his daughter came to him and knelt down by his side.

"I but walked a little," he said to her. "I was very alone in the hogan—and I did not see the wash. This water and this bread are very good—I am strong now."

"Oh!" cried the daughter, and her voice was very glad, "the sickness is not in his mind—how good that is—and he is hungry, and eats—look how he eats!"

Then the men who had come with the woman crowded close about the old man and were very happy that his mind was well again. They found that his bones were not broken but he was not strong enough to walk yet, so they made a comfortable place for him with the blanket and began to carry him very carefully toward the place where he lived.

Chi-weé and Loki watched the others, but no one looked at them or spoke to them, and when the old man was finally carried up out of the wash they turned toward the mesa and started to walk home.

They were very silent for a while and they had altogether forgotten about the nest they had started out to find. They had not gone very far when they heard someone behind them, running, and when they turned to see who it was, the woman who was the

daughter of the old man came up to them, panting.

"You have saved the life of that old man," she said, when she could get breath enough to speak. "He tells me the water gave him new life and your kind thoughts brought back the well thoughts to his mind, and no one would have found him in that 'onely place if you had not come. He is grateful and I am grateful. Look—he sends you this——" and she put into the hand of Chi-weé a very beautiful silver bracelet with a blue turquoise set in it, and into Loki's hand she gave two blue stones to wear in the ears. "And I give you this also, for love of my father"; and she threw over Chi-weé's head a necklace of very small silver beads.

The two children stood very still when the woman gave them the things, and even when she turned quickly and waved and smiled to them, and ran back the way she had come, they could think no words to say.

"But," said Chi-weé, in a little, when the woman was quite out of sight, "I did not think to get beautiful things—I had love for that old man and was very *glad* to help him."

"Yes," said Loki, "but it may be *he* is happy to send these too."

And when they had examined the lovely gifts they grew more and more excited.

"Oh, let us hurry!" cried Chi-weé. "I must show my mother!" and they ran the rest of the way to the mesa. But when they came to the foot of the trail Loki called to Chi-weé:

"It is time, now, that I go; for many days you will not see me, but when I return I will tell you about the races and it may be we will do them in the desert —you and I."

"Yes," nodded Chi-weé, "and do not stay in that Ganado place a too great while."

He waved to her and then disappeared around a corner of the mesa. Her plump little legs ached as she ran up the long steep trail to the mesa top, and her breath came short and fast; always her excitement grew greater when she told her mother about the things that had happened on her journeys into the desert, and this time there was so much to show.

"Oh, my mother!" she cried, as she burst into the little house. "Oh, my mother, so much has happened this day—and look what I have brought!" But her mother was not in the room, a quick glance told her that, and stifling a sense of sharp disappoint-

ment, Chi-weé put her treasures in a safe place on the little stone shelf over the fireplace in the corner of the room and started out immediately to look for her mother.

It was hot here on this western side of the mesa, with the sun's level rays shining straight into the little white houses, and Chi-weé was tired, but she gave no thought to the heat or to her weariness or to the sacred turkeys that pecked angrily at her legs as she passed, or to the dogs that would not move from her path but lay like little furry rugs in almost every spot of shade. Her thoughts were filled with the happenings of the day and with the joy of telling them all over again to the mother she loved so dearly.

She found her mother on a roof top with a friend, stringing red peppers to dry in the sun. There were a great many red peppers, for they were much liked in the cold season, cooked with beans and corn and in meat stews—Chi-weé, herself, liked them greatly —but now she wished her mother would come to the end of stringing them, for the news she had was hard to keep and she did not wish to speak before the neighbour woman. She did not even go up to the house top, but waited as patiently as she could on the

edge of the mesa, looking out over the wide desert below.

Presently her mother came down the ladder carrying her strings of bright peppers, and the little girl danced at her side until they reached the house that was their own—and then it was the mother who grew round-eyed and excited as she heard the story of all that had happened that day.

She had many words to say to Chi-weé, and felt very proud of what she had done, and then, when they had examined many times the gifts, a thought came to her.

"And what of that nest?" she asked—"the one you went to find in the desert?"

Chi-weé laughed. "Not one time did I think of that nest," she said. "It was such a *different* kind of nest that we found."

"But look at this," said her mother, and led the little girl out of the house and to a corner where, up in a place where the poles of the house met, little twigs were woven together and a small nest hung. She lifted Chi-weé high to see within, and there on the soft inside were five little eggs, speckled and spotted a beautiful blue.

"Oh," gasped Chi-weé, "*you* did not have to go

far into the desert to find *this* nest, but if *I* had not gone, that old man would not have been found.—I think he is glad, and that woman is glad."

"Yes," cried her mother, and squeezed the little girl tight. "And since I have found *you*, *I* am *always* glad!" and they went back into the house together.

CHAPTER XIII

THE SURPRISE

Time holds a loom for us each day,
With threads of golden hours;
And we may tear the threads away
Or weave them bright with flowers!

IT WAS a sparkling morning! One of the kind when even the sky seems shiny and a little voice inside of you somewhere sings and sings, and your feet want to keep time to it! The strings of chili peppers hanging by the doorways of the pueblo houses seemed redder than usual, the houses whiter, and the sky bluer! Out over the desert there was a shimmer of dancing heat waves, but up here on the mesa top the air smelled of dawn and dew on sage and cool springs down in the rocks!

Chi-weé felt it all and more—lots more! She felt like walking on her tip-toes and throwing out her arms and calling out to all the pueblo how happy she was—for down in her heart she had a secret! A surprise secret—and THIS WAS THE DAY!

If she had known what the real surprise was to be and all the strange things that were to happen to her very soon, she would have been more excited—oh, very much more! But she did not know—and no one knew!

Down at the foot of the mesa, not very far from the spring, Chi-weé had a "secret place"—a small cave in the rocks that she had found herself; a place she had not shown to any one, even to Loki. No one else knew anything about it at all for it was very well hidden by a great bunch of sagebrush that grew right in front of the narrow entrance. Inside there was room for several people if they did not stand very straight, and in the little cracks between the stones and on the edges of the rocks themselves Chi-weé kept her treasures—her very best ones. Older ones do not know anything about the kind of treasures she had, for they have no eyes to see how truly wonderful they are—bright bits of stone that might be precious jewels; pieces of broken pottery that make you think of all the beautiful things they once were; curious-shaped sticks and knots of wood that look like animals and people; dried beetles and butterflies and pretty leaves; colored feathers and little clay figures that she had made herself. It was a beautiful col-

lection and best of all, it was her own and she could arrange it just to please herself.

The light came in here, cool and green, through the sage at the entrance, and even on the hottest days outside it was not hot in the "secret place."

Almost every day, when she came to the spring for water, Chi-weé would come here and play and sometimes dream. One of the games she played was like this: Suppose some wild Indians should come and capture the pueblo and drive all her people away—she would come here, she and her mother, and bring plenty of food, and they could steal out in the night time and fill many jars with water; then she would push great rocks in the spring or put a very bad poison in it, and all the wild Indians would die and she would go and bring her people back to the mesa and then they would make her chief of them all or else she would marry the chief! This was her favorite game, and she brought an old blanket to the cave that she and her mother could sleep on and each day she brought piki bread and a jar of water for their food. She knew of no tribe of wild Indians who would come, but that did not matter—the desert was large, almost as large as the whole world, she thought, and they might come from very

far away—from a place no one had ever heard of before.

Then another game she would play was with her pretty stones—suppose they *were* jewels and some day the Trader at the canyon store would give her a great amount of money for them—what wonderful things she would buy! A little baby brother—that always came first; it was what she desired above anything else. And then—a DONKEY! One with big, brown eyes and flappy ears, and stiff little legs, that could carry great bundles of sticks from the desert, and she could ride on top of the bundles and sing and call out to the people as she passed. That was a very nice game and she could play it almost all day long—just as long as she did not remember that there was corn to be shelled up there on the mesa top and the little Ba-ba goat to be milked down in her small corral not far from the cave place.

There were other games that she played, too, when she could not go out into the desert to play with Loki, but these were the ones that she liked best—until lately—*lately* it was her surprise (the one that she *knew* about) that had taken all her home time and thoughts. Weeks ago she had, with much trouble and patience, set up a little loom for weaving,

Her mother was not like the other women in the pueblo. She enjoyed weaving when she could find time.

just like her mother's, only smaller (her mother was not like the other women in the pueblo. She enjoyed weaving when she could find time, and she did it better than the men did!), and each day, since then, when she came down to the spring for water, Chi-weé worked a little in weaving a beautiful belt—in *her* eyes it was beautiful—of red and green wool, a belt that her mother could wear on feast days and in the dance. How she had worked on that belt! And though there might be some loose threads in it and the pattern was not as straight in places as the ones she would do *some* day, she knew her mother would be very happy to get it, as it was her very first weaving—and to-day it would be finished!

"FINISHED! FINISHED!" sang the voice inside her, and Chi-weé could hardly wait until the morning tasks about the home were done and she could take her jar and run down the trail to the spring. But there were the blankets to be folded on her little shelf-bed against the wall, and the room to be carefully swept with the bunch of coarse grass tied near one end which served as broom on the long end, and as hair brush where the grass was tied in a short bunch at the other. Then there was corn to be ground and the baking stones to be thoroughly

cleaned, and the fireplace to be brushed; but at last it was all finished and Chi-weé took her water jar and put it on her back as she slipped the strip of smooth hide that held it over her forehead.

"If I should be a little long with the water, my mother, do not fear," she said. "I think you will be *glad* when I come back."

"I am always glad," smiled her mother, "when you come back, little one."

Chi-weé smiled in return.

"But *more* glad, this time," she said. "There is a reason why you will be *more* glad this time." And with a happy little skip she ran out of the doorway and down the trail.

It grew warmer and warmer as she went down the trail and a drowsy buzz of summer insects came up from the desert. A wagon was in sight on one of the roads and a great cloud of dust hung over the horses as they plodded along. Chi-weé wondered if Loki was in that wagon. She would miss him while he was gone, but *this* day there were such happy things to think about!

Before long she was bending over the little loom and tying securely the last threads of the beautiful belt.

"How glad she will be," she whispered to herself. "How glad my mother will be when she sees this!" And—then——!

Part of the REAL SURPRISE—HAPPENED!

There was a soft rustling at the cave mouth—a rustling that made Chi-weé turn her head quickly and forget the sash. Then her eyes opened very wide—as wide as they possibly could—for through the sage at the cave entrance came——

First—a wild mop of *very* black hair!—And then a pair of *very* round black eyes in a baby face!—And THEN—a little crawling baby body itself. And when it got inside it sat down and looked all around very gravely and carefully, with a fat little fist stuck in its mouth and a perfectly satisfied expression in its round baby face—but nothing very much else on, at all—except a short, very dirty little shirt that reached from its neck to its waist.

Chi-weé and the baby looked at each other for a moment. Chi-weé was so surprised that she could not speak or even move, but the baby did not seem a bit surprised, and after a moment he took his fist out of his mouth and, with the brightest smile a baby can give, held out both chubby arms to Chi-weé.

"Oh," she said then, finding her voice at last.

"Oh, but you are a *sweet* baby!" and she put her arms about him and hugged him tight.

"Gaa-oo-oo!" said the baby, and that meant a great many things—and in every language. He stuck his fist into his mouth again in perfect content. He soon saw the bright belt, the one that Chi-weé had just finished, and reached for it eagerly, but the little girl was quicker than he and put it up safely beyond his reach. Then he looked all around the cave with bright eyes and nodded as if it pleased him. Never had Chi-weé had any one else in her little "secret place" before, and it delighted her to see that this first one liked it.

"Look at *this!*" she said, and reached for her treasures for him to see. He made soft little sounds when he saw the pretty stones and immediately tried to eat them. Then he beat on the floor with the little sticks and laughed aloud and pulled her hair when she put her face down to him.

Chi-weé forgot the surprise for her mother; she forgot the time and where she was. A baby! And *such* a baby! She felt that, more than anything else in all the world, she wanted this baby—for always—to keep!

"He could be my little brother!" she said to herself.

happily. "My very own little brother. And I would take care of him so nicely. Oh, I shall ask my mother if I can keep him—I'd rather have him than a little donkey—or *anything!*" And then a lovely thought came into her mind! *He* could be the surprise! Why not? Her mother did not know what she was to bring.

"I have a goat," she said to the baby, softly. "A little goat, and her milk is good." He looked at her as if he understood and then his little lip quivered and a big tear came on his long eyelashes.

"Oh," cried Chi-weé, "I do believe you are hungry —look, I have this." And she put a piece of dry piki bread in his hand and held a small jar of water for him to drink He spilled more than he drank, on the little short shirt, but he smacked his lips and sucked hard at the jar until his thirst was satisfied; then he settled back on her lap again comfortably and went promptly to sleep.

Chi-weé hardly dared breathe now for fear of waking him.

"Where did he come from?" she wondered, suddenly, and strangely enough, it was the first time she had thought of that. "And why had no one followed him and taken him away?—Suppose no one

ever *did* come!" and she hugged the baby tighter at the thought and looked toward the entrance of the cave. Suppose no one had seen him come in here and did not know where he was. If she kept very, very quiet they might never find him. Would that be wrong to do? Her eyes grew big as she tried to think it out and then, deciding quickly, she laid the baby very, very gently on the old blanket and crept carefully to the cave entrance.

She crawled through the sage bush and looked in every direction. It was true that there were great rocks that hid almost everything from her view—the desert and even nearby places—but she felt much better as she went back into the cave—she *had* looked, and there was no one there! And she went back to the baby and put her cheek on one of his fat little hands. How softly he slept, and what a sleepy sound the insects made as they buzzed and buzzed outside. Chi-weé thought she would see if it was a comfortable place where the baby was sleeping—and it was very comfortable!—and soon there was the sound of two people who slept—but no one was there to listen!

It was late afternoon when Chi-weé opened her eyes again; she knew it was late by the feel of the air, and she sat up suddenly with thoughts of her mother

and of the afternoon tasks she had not done, up there on the mesa top. The baby opened his eyes good-naturedly as she got up, and kicked his little heels straight in the air. He was very attractive and she would like to have played with him some more, but now they must go—and——

"Oh, the surprise," she thought. "*Two* surprises! Come, little one—you will have new things to see!"

She took the baby in her arms and tucked the pretty new belt in the front of her little cotton waist, and when she had crawled through the sage bush, she looked cautiously around again, but it seemed as if they two were alone in the whole world, and Chi-weé started as quickly as she could up the trail.

The baby was very heavy and it was not easy walking with such a burden, but after resting many times, she finally reached the top and was very glad to have met no one on the way. She did not know what she could say if she *did* meet someone and they asked about the baby—her mother would help her decide that, and so she was very anxious to reach her.

How glad her mother would be about the two surprises: a new belt and a new little baby brother. She had to say it over many times to herself that her

mother would be very glad, for she did not feel *quite* so sure now about it, and with every step she felt less certain. If her mother would feel so glad about the baby why hadn't she gotten one before this? No, her mother might be surprised—oh, very surprised—but she might want her to take the baby back again, and how could she do that?

Her steps grew slower and slower as she drew near her door—and then she stopped altogether and waited for a minute before she went in—but the very first thing she realized as she opened the door was that her mother was not there.

She hardly knew whether she was glad, just for a minute, or sorry. But in another moment a fear thought came. It was the hour to prepare the evening meal, but there was no fire in the little fireplace and no food on the hearthstone. That was strange. Chi-weé could not remember when it had ever happened before. She laid the baby on the blankets of her bed, he had been very good and quiet, but his eyes followed her every movement and she knew that he must be hungry.

There was a jar near the door where her supply of goat's milk was kept, and now she found it half full. The baby drank greedily and smacked his lips. She

would have smiled at him at another time but now she did not feel like smiling. Where was her mother? —What had happened *here* on this day so full of unusual things? And now, what was she to do? These were big questions for a little girl to decide and they kept the smile thoughts away for the time. But Chi-weé never thought long without doing something and there must be something that she could do now.

She put a piece of dry piki bread in the baby's little fist, saw that he was comfortable and safe on her bed place, and then she walked out of the room, closing the door softly behind her.

CHAPTER XIV

INTO THE DESERT

"Away, away!" cries the little trail,
"Into the desert we'll go—
And we'll travel on 'til the day grows pale,
And evening breezes blow!"

IT WAS growing dark as Chi-weé walked out into the pueblo street, and she stood for a moment outside her door looking in all directions, uncertain just what to do. She *must* find her mother—that was her very first thought—and yet she felt sure that if her mother was on the mesa she would be in her home before this or would have sent someone to her with a message. A big fear thought, that grew bigger every moment, tried to knock at her heart, but she would not let it in!

"I *will* find her!" she kept repeating, under her breath. "I *will* find my mother—or someone who knows where she is!"

"Why, Chi-weé," said a familiar voice, and a friend of her mother came out of the darkness to

where she was standing. "Where have you been, child? Your mother searched much for you and then had to go without seeing you."

"Where is my mother?" cried Chi-weé, and all the fear and terror that she had tried to keep out of her heart was in her voice. The woman put out her arm and drew the little girl close in a kindly way.

"No harm has come to your mother, little one—it is the aunt who has a sickness and sent for her to come. The aunt who lives in the canyon. Your mother will be gone for a few, or maybe more days. I am to see that you have food and keep out of mischief. I would take you into my house to sleep but, as you know, our beds are more than filled up with little ones now. Will you have fear to sleep alone?"

"Oh, no," said Chi-weé, and there was great relief in her voice to know that her mother was safe. And then another thought came into her mind—the baby—should she tell this friend?

"But where have you been, Chi-weé?" spoke the woman again. "Much has happened this day, and there are thieves about—child thieves—not here, but below in the desert."

"What is it that you mean?" asked Chi-weé, and there was a tremble in her voice and in her little

knees. "I was down—down—in a little cave place —and I saw no thieves."

"A man came up here this day," continued the woman, "just after your mother had gone down the trail—and he said his baby was stolen—he was very wild, and asked all in the pueblo if they had seen the little one, but no one had seen him."

"Who was he?" asked Chi-weé, and her voice was almost a whisper. "Who was he and where did he go?"

"That I do not know," answered the woman. "He spoke as if his mind was not right with fear for his child, and he did not speak his name or where he lived. No one here had seen him before, and he went down the trail and did not come back."

"Oh," said Chi-weé, and she did not know what to do or what to say. She was afraid now to tell of the baby and she was afraid not to tell! Would they think she was a thief? And *was* she a thief, for not taking the baby back the minute he crawled into her "secret place"? What would they do to her if they knew? What *did* they do to people who stole babies?

"I—I—think I will go to sleep, now," she said. "I do not want to eat any supper. Do you think

that man—the man that lost the baby—will come again?"

"No," said the woman, "I do not think he will come again here—why should he? They who took the child must have gone into the desert and he will follow them there. What is that noise?" There had been a little sound from the room Chi-weé had left, a very *little* sound, but it made her heart beat fast—for she knew what it was and where it had come from, but the woman listened only for a moment and then turned her head away. "A dog—it must have been a dog," she said, carelessly, and turned to go.

"I will see that food is brought to you in the morning, Chi-weé," she said, "and if there is something for which you have need, come to me."

"I am very grateful," said the little girl, in a low voice, and went back into the house as the woman walked away.

All through the night Chi-weé tossed and turned in her sleep and it seemed to her that men with dogs and guns were after her—always and everywhere she went. And in the morning her first thought on awaking was:

"I will take the little one down to my cave place and wait. and *wait* until the man comes back!" but

it is not always the things we plan that we do, and Chi-weé had to change her plans very greatly, several times, through this strangest of all strange days!

It was not so easy to keep the baby quiet this morning. There was no milk and Chi-weé did the best she could with piki bread and water but the baby showed plainly that he did not like it.

"Just a *little* while," begged Chi-weé. "If you will only keep quiet a *little* while, wee one. I shall get milk from my little goat and you shall be fat and happy again. But I must wait until the woman brings food—Chi-weé cannot live without food. But I shall put *you* in a great basket, when she comes, so that she will not see you—if *only* you will be quiet—very, *very* quiet——" but just then, before she could even hide the baby with a shawl, the door opened and in walked the woman who was her mother's friend. She stopped in the doorway and looked with round eyes at the baby. Then she looked at Chi-weé, and her astonishment spoke in her voice.

"That—that—baby!" she said. "Where did you get that baby?"

"I *didn't!*" answered Chi-weé, and she choked back a sob. "I didn't get him at all—he just *came!*

I—I—am no *thief!* I don't know where he came from or who he belongs to. I love him though," she added, as an afterthought. "I love him *very* much, and if the man doesn't come, I am going to keep him for my brother."

The woman's eyes grew rounder than ever, and she seemed not to find any words to say immediately —then——

"But what do you *mean*—he *came?*" she said.

"He *did*," answered Chi-weé. "He came to my cave place while I was there—and there was no one else."

"What words are these?" said the woman. "Never have I heard such strange words. This would not have happened if your mother had been here—you are a bad girl," and it seemed to Chi-weé that she looked at her very queerly. She did not like the look in the woman's eyes, and she hugged the baby more closely.

"Give me that baby," said the woman, sharply.

"Oh, no," cried Chi-weé. "He is mine—I—I want to keep him. If the man does not come, I want to keep him for always."

"We shall see about this," the woman said.

"Others shall know of this. Do you think we will have thieves in our pueblo?" and she walked quickly out of the room.

Chi-weé was truly frightened now. What would the woman do? Would they really say she had stolen the baby and put her in a place where she could never see her mother again? That was what she had heard that they did with people who stole things, and stealing a baby must be the very worst thing any one could do. She made up her mind very quickly, she must get away from here—she must go to her mother. She did not know *how*—but she must go *now*—and, of course, she must take the baby. He would be very heavy to carry, and she could not think, just this minute, how she could get milk for him, but she would manage somehow, and she gave him a great hug before she laid him back on the bed.

She moved very quickly now, getting her few things ready, for she did not know how soon the woman would come back with others. First, she took an old shawl of her mother's and, putting the baby on her back, tied the shawl firmly about her shoulders as she had seen the women do. Then she made a little bundle of all the piki bread and dried apricots

and dried meat and pinyon nuts that she could find and put them in the shawl with the baby; then over him she carefully laid a light piece of cotton cloth so that no one passing could tell just what she carried on her back. All this had taken a very short time, and now she walked out of the little room and closed the door behind her.

There was no one in the street and an old man she met near the head of the trail hardly seemed to look at her at all and only nodded his head in greeting.

She walked as quickly as she could. The baby was very heavy but it was much easier going down the trail than it had been coming up. Her only thought now was to reach her mother. That the canyon was very far away and that she could not possibly walk there—or that those in the pueblo might follow her and bring her back—these things did not enter her mind at all. First, when she had come down the trail, she went to the little corral where Ba-ba, the little goat, was kept, and she and the baby made a good breakfast of fresh goat's milk and piki bread, then she got two small jars and a strong piece of thong from her cave place—filled the jars with water at the spring, and bound them loosely with the thong and laid them across the back of the little goat.

With these simple preparations she was ready to start out into the great desert—over a trail that she did not know. If she had been older she would not even have thought of such a journey, but she was very young, and had lived much alone with only her mother to talk to about really serious things, so the dangers that were before her and the weariness and the trails that led to nowhere, bothered her not at all and her heart was very light as she started out toward the blue mountains that she remembered had been ever before them as they traveled that other time toward the canyon. And the little goat, with its jars of water, followed after her just as it had done many times when they went to gather pinyon nuts or clay for her mother's jars.

They had not gone far when Chi-weé noticed a strange thing—the baby began to grow heavier and heavier with every step—and the sun began to get warmer and warmer—and her breath began to come shorter and shorter.

"Oh, but this is strange," she thought to herself, and stopped. "I must have gone a very great way." But when she looked back at the mesa, there it was, still so near that she could see a woman coming down the trail with a water jar on her head. "It may be

She was ready to start out into the great desert.

that she is coming for me," she thought, in a panic, and ran a little way toward the blue mountains, but she soon saw that she could not hope to go faster than any one who might come after her, so the only thing to do, if she saw someone coming, would be to hide. There were plenty of mesquite and sagebrush and great rocks about, and every so often a sandy wash with steep sides and many bends and hiding places, so she knew that she would have no trouble in hiding, and that gave her a comfortable feeling, but still it did not make the baby any lighter and, after a while, she found that she would have to rest.

She chose for her resting place a pinyon tree whose shade looked very inviting, and sat the baby on the shawl and then unfastened her little bundle of food.

Oh, how good it did feel to just *sit* with no load on her back! And the little goat nibbled at the scanty grass and seemed very grateful to be rid of the water bottles which Chi-weé had taken from her back—as she knew how a burden on the back felt. And then they all had a drink from the water bottles and a bite of food from the little bundle. The baby lay on his back and kicked and gurgled, but serious thoughts came to Chi-weé.

"I will *never* get there, this way," she thought. "I

am not big enough, I think, to carry a baby very far —it will take such a *long* time. Perhaps if I rest—a good rest—then I may be stronger." So they rested —so soundly that when a wagon drove up near them and stopped, they did not hear it, and only when the woman spoke did Chi-weé open her eyes.

"That is a great baby you have, little one," said the woman in a kindly voice. "Does your mother let you carry him yourself?"

"Oh, yes," said Chi-weé, wide awake in an instant. "He is my own baby brother—(for *this* time)," she added under her breath. "I can carry him, but not very far—he is heavy. But I must carry him to the canyon, the one in the blue hills," and she pointed her finger to where she wanted to go.

The woman opened her eyes and mouth and turned to the man who drove the wagon.

"Can it be that this child tells the truth? Can she be going to walk to that place—and with a *baby?*" He shrugged his shoulders as if the question were too deep for him, but Chi-weé spoke up eagerly; she saw a chance of being helped on her journey.

"My mother is there, in the canyon—and I must go to her. They—they—I am afraid to stay in the pueblo—I want to go to my mother."

"Oh, you poor child," said the woman. "Come—you shall ride with us. We do not go that far, not to the canyon, but we go in that direction, and you shall come with us. Give me that baby and I will take the care of him. I know more of the care of babies than do you."

Chi-weé handed the baby to the woman with a great silent sigh of relief—then she hesitated.

"And my little goat?" she asked, timidly. "May my little goat ride, too?"

The woman laughed—a big comfortable kind of a laugh.

"Oh, yes," she said. "The goat, too—all the family shall ride."

And they all got in and started into the desert. And a cloud of dust hung over the horses as Chi-weé had seen it do the day before—over that other wagon—and again her heart grew very light, as if there were wings that carried it up—for every turn of the wagon wheels brought her nearer to her mother.

CHAPTER XV

IN A NAVAJO HOGAN

Oh, what is so gay as the camp-fire blaze
With glow on the hogan wall?
It comes at the end of the happiest days—
The happiest time of all!

IT WAS a very pleasant ride they had in the wagon of the Navajo woman and her husband. Even the goat seemed to enjoy it and greedily ate the handfuls of alfalfa the woman gave it from time to time. The baby was more good-natured than ever for the woman knew the way to take care of babies and washed his little face and fed him and sang to him, for, not very long ago, she had had babies of her own and knew the things that they like.

But the very happiest of all in the wagon was Chiweé; for the blue hills came nearer every time the wheels turned round, and the woman was very kind, and all her fear thoughts were left behind her now, and it was good riding out over the beautiful desert.

Now she had time to watch the colors as they changed on the pink buttes; the rolling balls of tumbleweed, and the queer shapes of the greasewood and mesquite, and the tall blossoms of the yucca. She loved to see the prairie dogs scurrying into their holes and the horned toads and lizards sunning on the warm rocks. All these things she saw almost every day of her life, but to-day they looked very different, for her thoughts were different, and thoughts change everything.

It was still early in the day when the woman pointed to a round dwelling they were approaching and said:

"There is where we live. We go no farther than this. But, listen, little one—I have thought it all out—in ten days from this day, my brother will come. He lives very near the mouth of the canyon, and you will go there with him when he goes back. Until then you will live with me. I have my children and they will be kind to you, and I myself will care for this baby"—and she gave him a great hug. "In six days there is to be a big rabbit chase. The children will go and you will like that. That is the best plan. Will it not make you happy?"

"Y—e—e—s," said Chi-weé, very slowly, "but—

but—ten days is a very long time. You—you—are kind to me—and I am grateful."

The woman smiled and patted her on the head.

"You are a good child," she said. "Ten days will pass—it will not be so long—you shall see."

It was a strange house they entered in a little while, for, though Chi-weé had seen many of them from the outside, she had never seen the *inside* of a Navajo hogan. She wondered if this was like the one where Loki lived. It was round like a big "bake-oven" she thought, and faced the east, with a sheltered place of tree boughs built out over the door. The whole house was made of logs set up on end and plastered with mud, with a hole left at the top for a chimney. Inside it was very comfortable, though when the fire was lighted on the stone in the middle of the room, she noticed that the air was not so good and fresh as it was in her own pueblo home. There were seats around the wall that were used for beds at night and the blankets on them were soft and beautiful. There were a number of people in the hogan and they were very kind and friendly and made Chi-weé feel as if she belonged there, at least for the time.

This was a new life for her, with different food—good food, too—meats that she had never tasted be-

fore—deer and antelope—and she liked it. She liked the Navajo way of living, too. It was very different from the pueblo life—more outdoors and hunting and camp fires at night. She felt happy and friendly with everyone. They did not ask her questions about the baby and she felt very safe about him. She did not remember that the woman on the mesa had said that the man would go into the desert to look for those who had stolen his baby. She forgot, almost, that the baby was not her very own brother, and she loved him so much that no thought of ever giving him up came into her mind at all—and yet—out in the desert, coming ever nearer, was a man who loved the baby, too!

Chi-weé had no work to do here, among the Navajos, so she played all the time just as she chose. Sometimes it would be with the other children, and one day she went out all day long with three boys and a girl to take care of a herd of sheep. It made her think of Loki and his sheep and she wondered where he could be now! It was fun, she thought, to watch the sheep nibble at such grass as they could find and to see them play with the little baby sheep, with their tiny stiff legs—they were very funny and awkward in everything they did. Then she could watch the

little ground animals, and she discovered some that she had never seen before—a trap-door spider, and a little wild mouse that grew almost tame before the day was over.

But the games she liked best were the ones she played with the baby. He would sit very still and watch gravely while she built a house of mud and then, with one bang of his little fist, he would knock it down flat and laugh until he fell over, and Chi-weé would pick him up and begin all over again. But one house she built the baby did not knock down, though she wished *hard*, afterward, that he had. It was a lovely little house built of sticks stood up on end and plastered with mud, just *exactly* like the big hogan. It even had twigs of sage for a door shelter and a good-sized chimney hole. Chi-weé thought it was a beautiful house and brought the other children to see it.

"We will leave it," she said, "for the little people of the desert to live in. Surely they will like to live in a *real* hogan." The baby reached his little hands toward the house but Chi-weé drew him away and made another littler one for him to knock down. Four days they had been with the Navajos now, and they felt very much at home.

The next morning Chi-weé had her first ride on the

back of a donkey, and it seemed like a dream come true. There were two little bags of brush thrown across his back and she rode on these. She felt so happy that she sang a little song inside herself—"Oh, if my mother could only see me now—Oh, if my mother could only see me now!"

Just at first it was very comfortable, but then the donkey began to go a little faster. "Jog—jog—jog!" went the donkey, and "Bump—bump—bump!" went Chi-weé. Then one of the boys gave him a "Thump!" on the back with a big stick and then he ran so fast that the desert looked like streaks of green and pink sailing past. Up and down went Chi-weé, and when she could manage to, she reached down and put her arms tight around his neck. This wasn't so nice! Her teeth clicked together and the little knob of hair on the back of her head, Navajo fashion, went "Thump—thump—thump!" on her neck!

"*Stop* him—oh—stop him!" she cried, but the other children only laughed and shouted at the top of their voices.

"Hey—hey—Pueblo girl!" they cried. "Hold on tight!—You are learning to be Navajo, fast!—Hey!—Hey!—He'll stop soon!" And he DID! When he

saw that no one was going to hit him again he stopped so suddenly that Chi-weé, already low on his neck, went promptly over his head and landed in a little heap. Fortunately, the donkey had chosen to stop right in front of a big sage bush, so Chi-weé wasn't hurt a bit, but when she got up she felt herself carefully all over to see that she was all there.

"I think," she said, slowly, to herself, "I think I don't want a little donkey as much as I *thought* I did!" And she walked back to the hogan with her head high in the air, trying not to see the Navajo children, who were doubled up on the ground shouting and crying with laughter. She didn't feel like laughing—she felt just a bit homesick, and when she saw the baby she took him up in her arms and held him tight. *He* didn't laugh and make fun of her, and it was a great comfort to feel his soft little arms tight about her neck. After a moment he struggled in her arms and reached as far as he could toward the beautiful mud house Chi-weé had made the day before.

"Oh, yes," she laughed now, her sad thoughts quickly forgotten, "you can play with it to-day, for the sun has baked it hard and your little hands couldn't knock it down." The baby crawled quickly

over to the house and sat down in front of it. He made funny sounds with his mouth and pushed at the hard-baked mud. Chi-weé jumped up and down and clapped her hands.

"*Now* we have a house that you cannot push down!" she cried. "Push harder—big strong man!" But the baby pushed and pushed and banged with his fists, but without result; and then a different plan came to his mind, and he stuck his chubby hand through the chimney hole, turning his head and looking up into Chi-weé's face smilingly—but quickly his smile changed and he gave a soft little cry of pain—pulling his hand out of the hole. On the tip of one tiny finger a drop of blood stood up like a bright little jewel!

"Oh," cried Chi-weé, and there was horror in her voice. "A snake! There must be a *snake* in the house," and quickly she snatched the baby up and ran to the big hogan with him. The woman was just outside the door scraping a fresh hide, and she grew pale as Chi-weé thrust the baby into her arms, crying:

"A snake has bitten him!—Quick!—See, on his finger!"

They did things quickly then, and the woman

held the baby in her arms and watched his face as the little finger was sucked free of poison and bound with fresh mud and a bit of cloth.

But Chi-weé did not watch the baby—she was filled with fear thoughts. What if he should die? She could not bear to think of that. Oh, if only her mother were here! And then came another thought —what would her mother do if she *were* here? And she remembered the time when she had fallen from a great rock and her thoughts were taking her away—and away—from her mother and from the home place—something had brought her back from the shadows—— Yes, she remembered now—they were the words her mother had said, she had not forgotten them and she would say them now:

"The Great Spirit is taking care of my little one—I will *not* fear! He is *always* taking care of my little one!" Yes, that was it—and it was *true*—she *knew* it!

"I am going to kill that snake!" she said to herself. "My people do not kill snakes, but *I* am going to kill this one so that he will not bite another one!" So she took a great stick from a pile of brush beside the hogan and went to the little house. It did not look so pretty to her now, for she thought of what

was inside it. She gave a hard blow to it and knocked it down as the baby had done with the other houses, but no snake came out. Carefully she pushed aside the mud and twigs with her stick but nothing happened at all.

"That is strange," she thought. "He would be here yet." And then she knelt down and carefully examined all the scattered mud of the house and, at last she found—under it all—a bit of CACTUS LEAF! Very harmless except for some sharp little needles around the edge. One of the children, just for fun, must have dropped it down the chimney hole.

Chi-weé stared at it for just a moment, then she picked it up, where there were no thorns, and ran with it to the hogan.

"LOOK!" she cried to the woman who still held the baby. "LOOK at the SNAKE that bit our baby!"

The woman opened her eyes wide when she saw the cactus leaf, and then looked at the baby, who was very cosily sleeping on her arm.

"But—I do not understand," she said. "That is no snake!"

"Oh," laughed Chi-weé, very happy again now, "it was a *play* house—not a real one—and it was not

a real snake!—But I *thought* it was," she hurried to say, as the woman looked queerly at her. "I thought it was a real snake and went to kill it and found this!" Then the woman, too, was happy—and suddenly, to Chi-weé, the world was all sunny and bright again and she remembered that five days of the ten had gone and to-morrow would be the rabbit chase!

The rabbit chase—yes, she knew of that! But of the other things that were to happen—she did not know of *them!*

CHAPTER XVI

THE STORY-TELLER

Round the cosy hogan blaze
Tales are told of other days—
While the dark'ning desert sky
Echoes to the Night Hawk's cry!

WHEN Chi-weé entered the hogan that afternoon she felt certain that something unusual and very interesting was about to happen. An old man, a *very* old man, with a face as seamed and wrinkled as a walnut shell, sat in the middle of the room near the hearthstone, and around him were gathered all the children of the place with eager, expectant faces. The older folk sat on the low couches about the wall and they, too, were waiting for something to happen. No one spoke to Chi-weé as she entered, but one of the women motioned to her to sit down with the children and just as she had made herself comfortable the old man began to speak.

"A long time ago," he said, "there was great excitement in the camp of the animals."

"A *story-teller*," thought Chi-weé. "Oh, how glad I am to be here," and she settled herself more comfortably to listen.

"Their chief, Father Bear," went on the old man, "who had been head of the tribe since the very oldest could remember, was growing feeble and old and it was very clear that a new chief would have to be chosen, and very soon, too. Now there were ways in which a chief was chosen and they were wise ways, for the leader of the tribe must be strong and wise and very quick in thought. So a great dance was called and all the animals were invited to come.

"The Wolf and Coyote and Lion; the deer and buffalo and antelope; the birds large and small, and the animals from under the earth who live in burrows and holes and cracks in the rock—they all came and each hoped that *he* would be chosen chief of the animal tribe.

"The Lion was very strong and his loud voice could be heard far out into the desert telling how *he* would surely be chosen chief as no one was so strong and wise as he.

"'Ho,' answered a great Wolf. 'In that you are greatly mistaken, Brother Lion, for *I* am strongest and wisest of all the animals!'

"'You may be strong in one way,' said a thin hissing voice. 'But who is feared more greatly than I am feared?—tell me that, brothers!' and the Rattlesnake coiled and uncoiled himself as he waited for an answer.

"'There will be much fighting among the animals before this is settled,' sighed Little Tee-wanna, the horned toad, to himself. 'But *I* will not be in it, for no one will think of me at all—I am so small and so weak and not at all wise. But I am glad that I can do things to help people, even if I can never be their chief,' and he sighed again, a very small sigh, and kept on his way to the dance.

"It was a very wonderful dance, as all the animals were on their best behavior, hoping that they would be chosen chief of the tribe—all but the Lion, who felt so *sure* he would be chosen that he was very high-headed and spoke to the others in a commanding way as if already he was their chief.

"One of the dances was of the Warriors, and loudest of all the war cries was that of the Lion. Loud he roared and he leaped up and down and around the circle, and around and around long after the others had fallen out of the dance, almost too tired to move.

"'Who can dance as *I* can dance?' he roared. 'Who has the strength to leap as *I* can leap?—Come—who will fight me now?' (He knew well that they were too tired to fight!) 'Come—I shall be your chief, and all shall fear me!'

"'It is your size only—that makes you strong,' said the Coyote, but he was very careful to say it under his breath so that the Lion could not hear. '*I* am as strong as you—for my size—and if only I was a little larger *I* would be chief. Your body is big and your voice is big, but it is *my brain* that is big, and it shall make *me* chief yet!—You shall see!' He thought that no one heard what he said, but someone did hear him—Little Tee-wanna was very near him, hidden in the sand, and he heard every word, but he said nothing. He never said anything to any one if he could not say something that would make them happy and he could think of nothing to say to Brother Coyote to make him happy, for he thought the Lion would be made chief in spite of what the Coyote said.

"There were other dances to try the strength of the animals and in them all the Lion was strongest and loudest, and always he grew more commanding. But, finally, Father Bear, who was still their

chief, until another was chosen, called to them all to be silent and to listen to the words he had to say.

"'We are here, brothers,' he said, calmly, 'for one purpose—to choose a chief to come after me. He must be strong and wise and he must be kind. Have you thought, my brothers, who this chief shall be? Many dances we have had to try the strength and in them all Brother Lion has proven the strongest. It may be that he will be your chief, but we shall see. We have other tests before we choose. Seven nights from this night we will meet again, and in the days that lie between now and then, we must think, and think well on this matter Now, take of the good things that have been prepared for you to eat, and come again, as I have said.'

"The feast prepared for them was very good; there were fruits and nuts and melons and seed cakes and roots and honey—enough for all, but the Lion ate the best of everything, and when he saw anything that he wanted he took it from the one who had it, and they did not dare say anything, as they were afraid of his great strength. But Little Tee-wanna was not afraid, and he would run and get more of the food for the ones who had theirs taken away and he

would speak kindly to them and make them forget their fear and anger.

"After a while it grew very late, and one by one the animals went to the places where they slept, until only Father Bear was left by the great fire, and near him, in the sand, Little Tee-wanna lay with his bright eyes wide open, for he and Father Bear spoke often together when others were not near to listen.

"'Brother Lion is very strong, my father,' said Little Tee-wanna, after they had been silent a long while.

"'He is strong in the body but not in the heart,' said the chief. 'It may be that my people will choose him for their chief, but they will be sorry if they do, for he is not kind.'

"'No, he is not kind,' said Tee-wanna, thoughtfully. 'If they do not choose Brother Lion do you think they would choose Brother Coyote, my father?'

"'No,' answered the Bear and shook his head. 'No—Brother Coyote does not tell the truth—he is sly and crafty, too, and a great coward—my people know better than to choose *him* for chief. No, I think they will choose Brother Lion because they fear him—but I am sorry, for he is not kind"; and with

many a shake of his head old Father Bear went to his hogan to sleep, for the night was almost gone. But Tee-wanna did not sleep, he lay by the ashes of the fire until the dawn came, for he had many things of which to think.

"In the days that followed Little Tee-wanna kept his eyes on Brother Coyote, for he remembered the words he had heard him say and knew that he had deep plans of some kind, and the plans of the Coyote were always sly and crafty, and Tee-wanna felt that he should know what they were, to protect the other animals from any harm he might intend. So everywhere the Coyote went Little Tee-wanna followed him, and one day, as they trotted down a trail through the sage, he heard the Coyote talking to himself.

"'I shall be chief yet—they shall see! For my size I am stronger than the Lion—and no one can think and plan as *I* can.—HEY!—What is this!' and he stopped so suddenly that Little Tee-wanna, who was close behind, almost bumped into his hind legs. Before them was a strange-looking trap—a *man* trap—cleverly hidden by mesquite boughs and sage—but *in* the trap, doubled up in such a way that

it was plain to see that he was dead, was—the LION!—his neck broken by the thick poles of the trap!

"'AH-*HA!*' cried the Coyote, and there was great joy in his voice. 'Who is the strongest one *now?* Who will roar with a great voice and say, "*I* am your chief"?—Come here and fight me, *now*, Brother Lion—HI! YI!' and he did a dance around the trap, jumping high in the air and shouting in his glee. But Little Tee-wanna lay very quiet and watched. In a little while Brother Coyote stopped dancing and put his hand to his head and began to think.

"'I have a plan!' he said, suddenly. 'A plan —a plan!' and he jumped high in the air and kicked his heels together and grinned from ear to ear. And then he began eagerly to work.

"It took all his strength to do it, but he dragged the Lion out of the trap and over to a place in the rocks. It was very hard work and he had to stop many times to rest, but all the time he was talking to himself and grinning so hard that his ears seemed as if they would drop into his mouth any moment. All day he worked, dragging the Lion to a place where he would not be seen, and then when night came he began to skin him. Always Little Tee-

wanna watched and said nothing. In the morning the work was done and the Lion skin lay flat on a rock drying in the sun.

"That night was the night the Bear Chief had told the animals to gather again to choose their chief, and early they began to come—from near and far, the great and small—and they spoke much together in low voices and there was much smiling, but some fear on their faces.

"When they were all in place some noticed that the Lion was not there, and others said that Brother Coyote had not come to the council, and one asked for Little Tee-wanna, the horned toad. But Father Bear began to speak and they listened to him.

"'Brothers, we gather again to choose a chief,' he said. 'Have you thought well on this matter?'

"'We have thought well!' they answered with one voice, and just then a roar was heard—a rather strange, *small* roar—but the LION walked in among them and pushed aside all that were in his way. He walked right into the center of the circle and spoke to them without waiting to hear what Father Bear was going to say next.

"'I am here again,' he said, in a hoarse voice.

'It is not necessary to speak of others—*I* am to be your chief! I am stronger than any and wiser than any. I am the only one you can choose——" and then a very strange thing happened!

"He tried to speak again—and gave a little cough —and tried again—and gasped! The third time he tried—he SNEEZED! A great sneeze that sounded almost like a roar! The eyes of all the animals were on him and they grew round and amazed as his great body shook for a moment and then suddenly seemed to *MELT* INTO THE EARTH—and there before them—shivering!—stood the COYOTE, with eyes as big as theirs!

"'He has tricked us!' cried a small voice, the voice of Little Tee-wanna. 'Brother Lion was killed in a man trap and Brother Coyote took his skin and wore it to-night. He thought you would choose *him* for chief. I tickled him on the nose and made him sneeze—Look at him! He has tricked us!' And then, with a 'whoop!' the animals jumped for the Coyote. He gave one look back and then sprang for the open desert!

"On he ran, with the whole pack after him—on and on—until the country grew strange to him and the other animals gave up the chase and turned back

to camp. But he didn't stop running and runs yet at the sight of anything larger than himself!

"But when all the other animals gathered in camp again they were very happy, for no longer did they fear the Lion or the Coyote who had always been so sly.

"'It is Little Tee-wanna we want for chief!' they cried. 'We have thought it all out and there is no greater strength than the strength of kindness. When there is a fight needed we will fight for him—but he is wise and there will be no need for fights!'

"'It is well,' said Father Bear, well pleased. 'All of my wisdom I have taught him and he will rule you well.'

"And Little Tee-wanna was so happy and excited he swallowed a small pebble and thought it was a pinyon nut!"

"Is that so!" cried the Navajo children, in great glee, when the old man had finished his story.

"Yes, that is so." He smiled back at them and patted Chi-weé on the head. "And *this* is a little one who has a kind look in the eyes, and it may be that *she* will be a great Chief some day!" And Chi-weé was glad to run out of the hogan during the laugh that followed.

CHAPTER XVII

THE RABBIT CHASE

Out in the desert we'll go to-day—
A-hunting, a-hunting, HO! HO!—
We'll frighten the lizards and snakes away;
We'll kick up the dust 'til the sage turns gray;
We'll laugh and we'll sing, for our hearts are gay!
A-hunting, a-hunting we'll go! We'll go!
A-hunting, a-hunting we'll go!

THAT night many Indians came to the hogan and camped all around it, for the man who owned it and had driven the wagon was a sort of chief of the Navajos, and it was from his house, in the morning, that the rabbit chase was to start, and many of them were going on after that to Ganado, the big ranch where Loki had gone and where the white gentlemen, Don Lorenzo, the older, and Don Lorencito, the younger, and Don Roman gave them each year a grand fiesta with games and races and much feasting. Chi-weé heard much talk of this Ganado; of what a fine place it was and of the wonderful white people who lived there, who understood and liked

the Indians, and she had a big wish that she might go there herself some day.

Then came more Indians, men and women and children, and they were all in very good humor and talked and laughed a great deal. There were camp fires, too, many of them, and it was all a new and wonderful experience for Chi-weé.

Most of the Indians came in wagons with canvas coverings to keep out the heat in the daytime and the cold at night, and they looked very wonderful and very mysterious when they were lighted up after dark. The lights glowing through the canvas had the look of great, full moons hanging low over the desert.

There was a dance, too—not the kind of dance they held in the pueblo when there were many days of preparation and wonderful costumes; baking of food and the pounding of great drums—no, this was a very different kind of dance—a fun dance—with no preparation at all.

A man near one of the camp fires picked up an empty tin bucket and began to beat on it with his fingers. Then he began to sing. He looked very fine in the yellow firelight, thought Chi-weé, with the

bright red band on his head and the big silver earrings in his ears and his white teeth flashing as he sang. He wore a brown velvet shirt with large silver buttons and a very wide silver belt with many blue sky stones (turquoise) in it, and his trousers were of buckskin.

He sang for a moment alone and then another man came close to him beating time on anything he could find and others quickly joined them, until soon there was a large group of men singing and beating time and swaying to the music. It was very exciting and very wonderful with the black night sky over it all. And then they began to dance out around the fire—and any place where they could find an open space. The young boys joined them then, and the women, young and old—laughing and singing; clapping their hands and swaying rhythmically.

Chi-weé found herself beating time with her feet but she was a little too timid to dance right out into the open, and only watched them from the shadow of the hogan wall.

They danced until very late that night and as she fell asleep in her bed Chi-weé still heard the singing voices and the stamp of many feet.

Her first thought on awaking the next morning was of the rabbit chase. It was very quiet about the hogan and she found that most of the people who had danced the night before had already gone.

"It is *this* way, in a rabbit chase," the woman, the friend of Chi-weé, who had remained in the hogan, explained to her: "A great circle of people is formed out into the desert—a circle that is miles across, and those who are to be on the far edge must start very early, and ride on horses. The men, most of them, have gone there. The women are on either side—like *this*"—and she held out her arms wide on either side of her—"and the *children* will be in the part of the circle that is near home—that is why you were not awakened early, little one. They all go out to form this great circle and when it is large enough, they begin to walk toward the center, beating the bushes with sticks and making a great noise as they go. This frightens the rabbits and they try to run away, but as people are all around they can only run toward the center of the circle. Then, when the circle is very small, the people are very close together —sometimes the line is double—all the rabbits are in the center and cannot get out between the people. Then they are killed and the number is divided into

equal shares and everyone who has been in the chase gets his share—sometimes there are several rabbits for each one."

Chi-weé listened to this explanation with great politeness, but she was so eager to be with the others that she almost wriggled inside—while she was listening she was eating her breakfast just as fast as she could, and when she had finished she gave the baby a quick squeeze and ran out into the sunlight.

It was a wonderful day for a rabbit chase—just cool enough to make exercise comfortable—and Chi-weé was sure the wind must be blowing from the blue hills, as the air was so fresh and sweet, though she could not feel any wind at all, and she could hear the voices of the women away across the sage, calling to each other and laughing. The other children were just as excited as she and called to her to take her place in the circle and walk slowly away from the house. They were only a few yards apart and all carried sticks of some sort. Some of the sticks were bent and flat, rabbit sticks, and they could throw them very skillfully.

It was not long before they saw their first rabbit, and the children screamed and shouted as they went racing after it.

The little white tail could be seen for a long time, hippity-hopping, up and down through the sage, and then it disappeared.

"Oh, I *hope* he went down into his burrow," thought Chi-weé, and then she realized suddenly that that was a queer thing to think on a rabbit chase when they were out to hunt for rabbits! "But I do, just the same," she repeated to herself. "I hope they don't catch a single one of the poor, frightened little things." But that was foolish for they certainly would catch a great many rabbits and they were great thieves and did lots of damage to green growing things, and they were very good to eat. Chi-weé did not have time to think it all out just then, and she followed along with the others, and her heart beat just as hard as theirs when she saw the little white tails bobbing through the sage.

On and on they went, and after a while there seemed to be rabbits everywhere—ahead of them and beside them and slipping between them back into freedom and safety again—and she could hear voices of women coming nearer and nearer on either side and, away off in the distance, the shouts of men. The sun was getting warmer now, and Chi-weé noticed that her shadow was getting shorter

and shorter until finally she didn't have any at all, except just a little circle around her feet, and then she knew it was time to eat the little package of food the woman had given her. She sat down under a twisted mesquite tree, but the other children went on, not seeming to notice that she had stopped at all. In just a moment she heard a rustle in the bushes ahead of her and a little ball of gray fur shot out of the sage and came blindly straight for her. It was a baby rabbit, and so frightened that it did not know the difference between Chi-weé and a bush. It slipped under a fold of her little skirt as it lay on the ground and then stopped, its tiny body quivering and palpitating and warm against her knee. Then, through the same bush, with red flushed cheeks and excited eyes, came a little boy with a raised rabbit stick in his hand. He stopped at sight of Chi-weé.

"A rabbit!" he cried. "He turned around and came back this way—did he pass you?"

"No," answered Chi-weé, with her eyes big, and she put her hand on the fold of her skirt and held it there protectingly. "No, he didn't *pass me!*" and she was glad that she could tell the truth, for she meant to save this wee rabbit at any cost.

"Oh," said the boy, in a puzzled way. "Then he must be in these bushes," and he beat them with his rabbit stick and pushed his foot through them. But Chi-weé sat very still and did not move her hand.

"Oh, look!" she cried, suddenly. "There are some big ones!" She didn't really see one, but she knew there were many big ones just ahead.

"Where?" cried the boy, and went jumping uncertainly through the sage; then he seemed to decide that he was wasting time and ran after the other children.

"You poor little thing," said Chi-weé, and took the baby rabbit very gently in her hands and held it to her cheek. "You poor little thing, *you* sha'n't be caught to-day. I wish I could keep you." Then she heard a great sound of shouting and crying out away ahead. Children's voices and men and women, and she knew that the circle had drawn so closely together that they were beginning to kill the rabbits.

"I'm glad I'm not there," she said, aloud, to the little rabbit in her hands. "I'm glad I can't see them." Just then two rabbits who had escaped from the circle flashed past and the little creature in her hands struggled to join them. So she put him gently down and he was gone like a streak of

light, and she was glad to see that he ran in the opposite direction from the rabbit chase.

The shouting and noise was still going on ahead and Chi-weé got up and began to walk slowly in that direction. She remembered that rabbits *were* good to eat and she might dry the meat of some and take it to her mother; they had very little meat in the pueblo and she would go back there again before *very* long. She noticed a wide trail through the sage just where she was passing—a wagon trail—and just then she heard the thud of hoofbeats and a galloping horse, with a man on his back, came into sight. The man did not see her as he passed; he was looking down at a small bundle he held in his arms.

"A *baby*," thought Chi-weé. "That bundle was a baby.—Oh, I am so glad that *I* have a little baby brother now, and my mother will be glad, too—in only four days I will take him to her."

The shouting seemed to be over now, and the whole desert was very quiet for a few moments, and then she could hear them all coming back.

"Hi!" called a boy, as he came into sight. "Look what *I* got! Did you get yours?" and he held up two big, fat rabbits.

"No," answered Chi-weé. "I think they will not

give me any rabbits as I wasn't there when they were killed."

"Here, then!" said the boy, kindly, and he put one of the rabbits in her hand and ran on before she could thank him.

"They are *kind* people here," thought Chi-weé, and was greatly pleased to have the great rabbit. She stopped then and turned back toward the hogan; something seemed to be calling to her to come back—to come *quickly!* It almost seemed as if she could hear a voice, and presently she began to run. It seemed a long way back—much longer than it had seemed when she was with the other children and excited with the rabbit chase. It was warmer, too, now, and the dust rose up about her and choked her, but she ran on and on, to find out what it was that called her back.

The woman was standing in front of the hogan as she came near, and seemed to be expecting her.

"It was only a *little* while that I was gone," she cried. "A woman in one of the wagons called me—to show me a string of beads—and he was sitting in front of the hogan playing so contentedly that I left him. I thought he was safe—*any one* would think he was safe!"

A terrible feeling came to Chi-weé. She *knew* what the woman was going to say, but yet she must hear the words. She was still panting from her long run and words did not come very easily.

"*Who* was safe?" she cried. "What *is* it that you mean?"

"He is gone!" wailed the woman. "Oh, I thought by your eyes that you knew—the baby is gone!"

"*Where* has he gone?" asked Chi-weé, and was surprised that her voice was so calm.

"I do not know," said the woman, and she was crying now. "I saw a man on a horse—I thought nothing of it—and then, when I came to the hogan —he was gone. I have looked everywhere—he is not here!"

"A man on a horse," thought Chi-weé. "*I* saw a man on a horse, and he had a baby on his arm."

She walked into the hogan and put the rabbit down on the hearthstone. Then she found the old shawl she had brought and the little bundle of food that she had not needed to use. She did not seem to have any real plan in her thoughts and yet she did not wait one moment but walked out of the hogan and toward the way she had just come.

"Come *back!*" cried the woman. "Where are

you going?" But she did not answer, and when she met all the people coming back from the rabbit chase she did not speak to them either, though they called to her and held up many rabbits for her to see.

She knew where that trail was where she had seen the man on horseback, and though he was going much faster than she could go, she would follow him until he stopped.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE LIGHT IN THE DESERT

Evening shadows, gray and pale,
Cannot hide the little trail!
Through the darkest shade and gloam,
Straight it leads us—back to home!

ON WALKED Chi-weé—and on and on. After a while she forgot that she was walking and her feet just seemed to go of themselves. She tried not to think—she did not want to think—it hurt too much. But thought *would* come.

"Was the baby *stolen*, *really* stolen, this time? Or was the man who took him the one he *belonged* to!" She tried to see him, the man on horseback, again in her mind, to decide whether he looked like a thief or not. But she could only remember the little bundle he carried. The baby—*her* baby! And the tears rolled down her cheeks as she walked.

At first the trail was very plain as it went through the deep dust of the desert, but after a while it

went over a great strip of rocky land, and then she could hardly see it at all. Walking grew harder too as little stones rolled under her feet, and then large, sharp rocks cut into her moccasins and hurt her.

It seemed to grow dark very early that night, Chi-weé thought, as it grew harder and harder to see the trail, and finally she had to give it up altogether and look around for a place to stay until morning. She hadn't thought of having to stay out all night alone. She hadn't thought of *anything*, when she left the hogan, but finding the baby, and now she began to grow just a little bit frightened. On the ground might be snakes and coyotes, and maybe wolves and mountain lions, and she had no fire sticks to make a fire with which to frighten them away. Many a grown person would have been afraid to spend the night in the desert alone, and Chi-weé was only a very little girl. She could not stay on the ground, she decided that very quickly, and looked about for a tree to climb. There were none just where she was, but she found a twisted old pinyon in a short while, and it was easy to climb as it had so many knots and twists to put her feet on, but it wasn't very high above the ground—a

mountain lion, or a bobcat, or even a wolf, wouldn't have any trouble at all in reaching her if any of them had tried, but the only wild things awake in the desert that night seemed to be coyotes and they tried to make up in noise for all the animals who were not there! They howled and barked; they yelped and "ki-yied," sometimes very far away and sometimes right under her tree. It seemed to Chi-weé as if every coyote in all the world must have found out that there was a little girl alone in the desert that night and had come to see what she looked like!

At one time it even seemed that she could make out words in a sort of song that they sang:

"KI-YI, KI-YI!
She's up very high—
In the boughs of a tree
Near the sky—near the sky!"

She didn't like the song of coyotes, but she was not afraid of them, as she knew what great cowards they were. She had sent them running many a time on the desert just with a little jump and a "shoo—oo—o!" but at night and alone it was different and they made her feel more lonely than ever.

She slept very little that night, less than ever before in her life, she thought, and she was glad when the first pale-gray light of day came so that she could start away on the trail once more. But when she came down from her tree there *was no trail!*

The ground was rocky and wild and did not look as though a horse or wagon had ever touched it!

Back and forth she walked with bent head eagerly searching for signs of human creatures, but there were none. She must have lost the trail in the twilight of the night before.

"Well," she thought, helplessly, "if I cannot follow the man I will go to the canyon where my mother is. It is far, but I have nothing to carry now and I can walk very fast." But when she searched for the blue hills they, too, were nowhere to be seen.

"Oh, what shall I *do?*" she cried. "There is no trail and no hills!" And then a new terror came to her: she was very thirsty and had come away from the Navajo camp without any water, a jar would have been too heavy to carry, but she had not even thought of it. That was her first need now.

She climbed back into her little tree again and

looked in every direction—yes, it *did* seem as if there was a break in the rocky floor of the desert in one direction and she got down and walked that way as fast as she could.

After a while she came to a wash, a wash with steep sides very like the one near home, and she climbed eagerly down the sandy sides until she had reached the smooth strip that ran down its center. Choosing a place that looked a little lower and seemed to be a bit more damp than any other she got down on her knees and began to dig like a little dog. Sure enough! Before she had gone very far the sand grew cool and moist, and after a little while longer water stood in the bottom of the hole.

Without any hesitation she pulled off her little buckskin moccasin and dipped it down into the water. She could get very little at a time, but her thirst was soon satisfied.

When she climbed up out of the wash again she stood a moment on the bank, thinking. The blue hills were not lost, she thought; it was only that she was too low down to see them. She must find a place that was higher. All around her were little rises of ground, and it was hard to choose which

one she should travel toward, but then came another thought, very suddenly—and she laughed aloud when it came! How strange that she had not thought of that before. She remembered now that when she had gone to the canyon that long-ago time, the *sun had gone down behind those blue hills!* and so she must travel straight away from where it had come up this morning and she would be going toward the canyon! This thought quickened her step and made her heart very happy for a while, but when she had walked all that day and had not seen a trail or any sign of the blue hills, she grew more frightened every moment as the twilight came again.

She was tired, too, now—so tired her little feet felt the size of great squashes—and she was thirsty again and she had eaten her last bite of food at noon and had come to no more sandy washes.

She wrapped her old shawl tight about her shoulders and shivered as she looked for a tree to climb for the night. It wouldn't matter very much if she couldn't find a tree, she thought, miserably, she would never find the canyon this way and for tomorrow she had no food. But she found a little tree much like the one of the night before, and she

made herself as comfortable as possible in its hard boughs. She did not try to sleep this night, but looked up at the stars and wondered if what the Mission teacher had told her about them was true —that they were great worlds far, far away. They looked so near and friendly and she would rather think—as she had always thought—that they were little prayer sticks lighted to show the way to the up-above world. Yes, she liked that thought better, and there was one star that was very near the ground. So near that it looked much larger than the others—larger and redder. It was strange how near it looked and how low. And then Chi-weé sat up straight and blinked her eyes! It WAS nearer! It *WAS* in the desert! It was a *fire!* And where there was a fire there must be people!

Once she would have been a little timid about going near a strange camp fire at night in the desert, but now she was not timid. Her hands trembled as she climbed down out of the tree, but it was with eagerness to see these people who would have water and food and perhaps a wagon to help her on her way.

She stumbled over rocks and tree roots as she ran toward the fire, for it was now very dark, but she did not care. The light was farther away than it

had looked from the tree, but steadily she drew nearer to it. Yes, there was a covered wagon beside a camp fire, and now she could see someone sitting by the fire—a man.

As she came very near the fire, just outside the circle of its light, the man turned his face toward her and she stopped as if she had been frozen to the ground.

IT WAS THE MAN SHE HAD SEEN ON THE HORSE! The man who carried the little bundle!

Chi-weé could hardly believe her eyes, and yet she knew that she could not be mistaken. It was strange that, though she had come so far just to find this man, when she saw him it took her breath away and somehow she could not move.

He was speaking to someone in the wagon, and presently the someone came out and jumped to the ground. It was a woman with a shawl over her head, and her face was bent close to a little bundle she carried in her arms.

Chi-weé could stand it no longer. She stepped forward into the light of the camp fire.

"That is *my* baby!" she cried, and she did not know of the agony that was in her voice. What followed

then did not seem real to her—she felt that it *could* not be real!

The woman, with a little cry, raised her face and looked straight at Chi-weé—the baby nearly slipping from her arms, and for a moment it looked as if she, too, would fall—it was her MOTHER! Her very own MOTHER!—and Chi-weé gave a great sob and sank in a little heap on the ground.

"*CHI-WEÉ!*" cried her mother, and thrust the baby at the man as she gathered her own little girl into her arms. "I do not understand," she cried. "But, oh, it *is* my little girl!"

And Chi-weé could find no words to explain, but put her arms close about that dear, familiar neck and buried her face in the warm folds of the shawl and cried as if her heart would break.

"There, there, little one," said her mother, in a soothing voice, when she had cried for what seemed to her hours—and there were tears on the mother's face, too—"There, there. First you must have food—then you shall tell us what strange things have happened to bring you here. I, too, have news for you—but it will wait."

And when Chi-weé had been fed and petted and

wrapped warm in a big blanket, she sat by the camp fire and told them all that had happened since that day in her little cave place at the foot of the mesa. Her mother listened with bright eyes and a tear now and then as she thought of how lonely the little girl had been, and she hugged her tight, too, as Chi-weé cried:

"And oh, my mother—I thought how *happy* you would be when I brought the little baby—but now *he* has him," and she pointed to the man, who was holding the baby very carefully and lovingly at that moment.

"Yes," answered her mother, very happily now. "But I told you that *I* have news too. Listen to this——" and she leaned over and whispered in Chi-weé's ear. "He *has* the baby—but it is OUR BABY TOO!" and she drew back and watched the look of wonder and astonishment in the little girl's face. She laughed then.

"Ah," she said, "you think that is a great puzzle—well, just listen. You have a baby brother now, and you have a *FATHER* too! It was for that I came to the canyon as well as to see your aunt who had a sickness. For a long time we have been very good

friends, your new father and I—and now he needs me, and the baby needs me—and so, we have been married. And you told a true thing when you said to people that the baby is your little brother. Your father came for me to the mesa when your aunt needed me, and he brought the baby with him. The baby was left in the wagon asleep when he came up the trail, but he did not *stay* asleep—he crawled in some way out of the wagon and straight to you! Your father was very wild when he found the baby gone, and he has ridden many miles in every direction searching for those who took it. Only one day ago he was passing a hogan in the desert and saw his baby playing alone in front of the door. There was no one to speak to so he took the baby—our baby—and brought it to me. And now we are on our way back to the mesa. We shall have a new house, with *two* rooms, and your father will be very kind to you." She smiled at the man, who was still holding the baby, and he smiled back at her, and Chi-weé liked his smile. "And," continued her mother, "I shall let you have much of the care of this baby—here, take him!" And lifting him tenderly from the arms of the man she laid him in the arms of Chi-weé, who hugged him tight to her breast.

The baby put one fat fist in his mouth and looked up at her with bright eyes.

"Gug—gug—goo!" he gurgled, and Chi-weé understood *perfectly* what he meant to say!

THE END

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